

# The Freeman

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## CURRENT COMMENT.

CONGRESSMAN HAMILTON FISH, JUN., recently introduced a resolution in Congress requesting the President to call another disarmament-conference, and he followed this up with a letter to Mr. Hughes asking what he thought about the matter. Mr. Hughes replied with his usual caution that he had already held one such conference, and that another would hardly be feasible at this time. We believe that Mr. Hughes's reply was dictated by a sound instinct. As we recall the publicity for Mr. Hughes's big powwow in Washington, it was pretended that a mighty thorough job in the disarmament line had been done at that time. To keep on framing up fresh disarmament-junkets would bore the public, and lead them to take a cynical view of the pretensions of diplomats.

IN his letter to Congressman Fish Mr. Hughes states candidly that the Washington Conference accomplished nothing in the way of limiting land-armaments, airplanes, submarines or light cruisers, or in attempting to curb the respectable business of making and vending munitions. Mr. Hughes also revealed the fact that the Washington treaty abolishing the use of poison gas in war was unfortunately not ratified by one Power, so "it has not been possible to put it into effect." In short, the only accomplishment along the disarmament line effected at Mr. Hughes's highly touted party was the scrapping of some aged vessels and a curtailment of the tonnage in those larger ships of the line which Admiral Fisher, the genius of the British navy, was referring to as "false teeth" away back in 1914. Mr. Hughes now appears to believe that the League of Nations will presently, by passing a pacifist resolution or two, accomplish something towards the reduction of military and naval establishments! When one considers that the peace-time armament of Europe has almost doubled since the League was formed, this hope seems a bit naïve, even for a Secretary of State.

MUCH pleasanter it is to turn to Mr. Hughes's greatly needed plea for fewer and simpler laws. His recent speech before the American Law Institute was an admirably logical exposition which should be made the basis of compulsory study by every legislator in the land. In Congress and the legislatures of our forty-eight States,

Mr. Hughes pointed out, we have "the greatest law-factory the world has ever known." Each year upwards of 12,000 new statutes are ground out, and the highest courts supplement these with 13,000 interpretive decisions. It is little wonder if in this maze of legal entanglements justice wanders helplessly. If the present rate of productivity continues, we may come to the point where a political party committed to a policy of non-coöperation will have an irresistible appeal for the electors. The legislative candidates of such a party would be pledged to draw their salaries and stay at home.

APPARENTLY Mr. Roy A. Haynes, Federal Prohibition Commissioner, didn't know it was loaded when he asked President Butler to express an opinion "on the problem of re-establishing the majesty of law as it refers to the Eighteenth Amendment and the laws enacted subsequent thereto." Dr. Butler may be given to uttering sententious platitudes when he talks to chambers of commerce and the like, but he got down to practicalities in the most approved style when he replied to Mr. Haynes. The Eighteenth Amendment, he reminded the Prohibition Commissioner, is no more sacred than the First, or the Fourth, or the Fifth, or the Sixth, or the Tenth, or the Fourteenth or the Fifteenth; all are equally parts of the Constitution, and all ought equally to be observed. That there is any general disposition to enforce law as a whole, however, Dr. Butler is frankly unable to perceive; "no small part of the present cry for law-enforcement," he declares, "is insincere"; and he points to the recent "shameless declaration of lawless intent and purpose" on the part of the Governor of Oregon as an example of the widespread and dangerous contempt for law which obtains in this country at the present time. It is too much to hope that Dr. Butler's letter will work any change of heart in Mr. Haynes or his Protestant supporters, but it will perhaps set other people thinking.

WITH a curious air of pride, Attorney-General Daugherty states in his annual report on the "enforcement" of the prohibition law that during the four years of the Federal statute the courts have disposed of 115,000 cases and imposed something less than \$16 million in fines. Mr. Daugherty's figures leave no doubt that the law has crippled the efficiency of the Federal courts, and there is equally no doubt that the trivial total of fines imposed does not nearly pay for the army of agents, deputies, clerks, attorneys and special judges saddled on the taxpayers. As a financial proposition, prohibition is a sorry loss; especially when one considers that before the trade in heady liquors was formally disestablished it yielded \$300 million in annual revenue to the Federal Government alone. To-day the Government collects a paltry four million in fines, and the official blackmailers, grafters and gougers employed at the taxpayers' expense have a free hand to chevy the bootlegging gentry for what the traffic will bear. Mr. Daugherty expresses a pious hope that "the maximum number of violations has already been reached." In this vicinity at least, no adult of sound mind and eyesight can possibly discover any reason for this hope. The trade has got upon such a well-established basis that bootleggers freely distribute their business-

circulars, and in parts of the city they solicit trade from door to door.

IN 1920 Mr. Henry Ford purchased for five million dollars a 500-mile railway which was being run at a yearly deficit of over two million dollars. Mr. Ford raised wages generally, at a time when other roads were cutting them, and coincidentally he managed to raise the hauling-power of each ton of coal used. For 1923 the road showed a net operating-profit of over a million and three-quarter dollars. Railway experts seem inclined to belittle this remarkable transformation by pointing out that Mr. Ford, as one of the largest shippers in the country, was able to swing a great amount of traffic to his road, and that he was also able to dictate some shrewd terms for transshipments between his own and connecting roads. This is not the whole story, however. A good part of the story is that Henry Ford, railway man, was interested primarily in making money from the business of transporting people and goods rather than by juggling securities, dabbling in real estate, giving soft jobs to favoured dummies, and playing the game of give-and-take for profitable concessions and privileges. His road has been an investment, not a speculation with all sorts of collateral attachments in the way of private grafts and emoluments at the expense of stockholders and customers alike. The railway business is a good paying business, if one cares to run it that way; and Henry has given his rate-laden fellow-citizens an interesting demonstration.

IN accepting his redesignation as leader of the British Conservatives, Mr. Stanley Baldwin declared that the battle of the future would be between the Socialist party and the anti-Socialist party; and now Mr. St. Loe Strachey of the London *Spectator* has endorsed this dictum with the proviso that if the Conservatives are to unite and guide the anti-Socialist forces, Mr. Baldwin must step to the rear. Mr. Baldwin, according to Mr. Strachey, is such a super-whole-hogger on protection that he will not do. He recently demanded not only duties on imports but limitations on exports, and Mr. Strachey wisely feels that British business men would shy at such a daring plan for isolation. "Mr. Baldwin's leadership," he warns, "is Socialism's opportunity."

PROBABLY, as many British prophets agree, the moribund Liberal party will sooner or later give up the ghost, bequeathing, we fancy, a good part of the residue of its wits to the Labour brethren, and its worldly goods to the Conservatives. Thus there will be a united front against the powers of the Left, and all that the right-thinking leaders will then have to do is to find the Socialist party. If Continental experience is a guide, Socialist parties once in office are likely to be impelled so far to the Right that they can not see Karl Marx through the most powerful telescope. We note that Mr. MacDonald has already reported a plump naval bill which over a score of the pacifist comrades from the Clyde and other reddish districts could not bring themselves to vote for. He is finding that his job is the premiership of the British Empire, not of the Trade Union International, and he is compelled to do precisely what any of the rest of us would do in such a position.

WE are in no hurry to believe that the Non-Coöperative Movement in India is destined to seep away into the sands of politics, and yet the news from India is not exactly promising of a better outcome. The National Congress, meeting at Cocanda, has again refused to return to the earlier non-coöperative policy of boycotting the British-made Councils, and the Swarajist party is now urging the election of members to these Councils. The Swara-

jists are seeking election, they say, for the very purpose of preventing the political machine from working; and yet it is hardly to be expected that they will be able to hold to such a programme, when they are once in office. Much more promising was the non-coöperators' original plan for a voluntary organization of the people, to take care of all useful political functions in complete disregard of the established Government; but even here there was the prospect that this organization would itself be metamorphosed into a compulsory and thoroughly conventional State, if British control were once got rid of. As we see it, the prime defect of the movement has been from the start an absence of any clear sense that most of the ills of the Indian people are economic, and are quite certain to survive any revolution that is merely political. The non-coöperators employed in the beginning a particularly effective means of obtaining the political independence of India; but exactly how much, in terms of human happiness, does the political independence of Japan, for instance, amount to?

WHETHER or not the *coup d'état* predicted by the London *Daily Herald* and the New York *World* be actually imminent in France, the next few days may perhaps show, but there is nothing in the least improbable in the story. The general assault upon constitutional government which began as soon as the world-war broke out, and which has continued without abatement since the peace, has been particularly pronounced in France, and nothing, apparently, except a revolution can prevent it from coming to a head. Moreover, as always happens when politics get the upper hand, big business has taken the side of reaction; and in France the overshadowing representative of big business is the Comité des Forges. This powerful organization of metallurgical industries has long been known to be at the bottom of the Ruhr imbroglio; it is deeply interested in reparations; whether its members are involved in the huge scandals over claims for war-damages that have lately been unearthed, remains to be seen. It is wholly in keeping with its character that with elections pending in France and Italy, a weak Labour Government in England, Soviet Russia on the point of receiving general recognition, and the Dawes committee about to propose huge financial operations which shall "make Germany pay," the Comité des Forges should feel that a dictatorship which it can control is the only kind of Government with which it can safely do business.

PREMIER POINCARÉ'S success in extracting support for his financial programme from Parliament has not deceived anyone in France regarding the meaning of what has been going on, and there is no reason why it should deceive anybody anywhere else. Ever since M. Poincaré became Premier, more than two years ago, he has acted, apparently, on the theory that he was the State, and that consequently he could do as he pleased. When from time to time his course has been challenged in the Chambers, his uniform defence has been an irritable and pugnacious "Take it or leave it!" Uncertain and dwindling majorities in the Chamber of Deputies, together with the threat of solid opposition in the Senate, should have warned him that France has a Constitution and a long tradition of revolution; but he has ignored both omens. Now, after two years of strong-arm methods, constitutional government in France is seen to have disappeared, and ministerial autocracy is openly established. What has happened in Italy under Mussolini, in Czecho-Slovakia under Benès, and in Hungary under Bethlen, has happened in France under Poincaré.

THE notion of the Athenians that the Spartans devoted themselves whole-heartedly to war because life in Sparta in peace-time was so intolerable, has recurred to us in

the course of an examination of a report on unemployment in England. The survey dealt with in this report was undertaken by a group of publicists in the autumn of 1922—a long time ago, it will be said; and yet the conclusions have not lost their interest. The most striking discovery of the investigators was that unemployment had apparently produced no damaging effect upon public health; in Birmingham, one of the cities most seriously affected by the drawing of the factory fires, there was less disease than had been recorded in any previous period. In explanation of this condition of affairs, it is stated that the mass of unskilled labourers, under-paid and irregularly employed in normal times, are now assured, by public doles, of at least a regular supply of food; and to this one might add that loafing, even in a tenement or a public house, is perhaps less damaging to health than are the conditions to which these unskilled workers are likely to be subjected when there is work for them to do. If these men have developed, then, a preference for "hard times," it is because "prosperity" is still altogether intolerable, even in an economic sense, for a large part of our society.

THE dignified persons of exceptional solvency who affect to believe that a strike is unthinkable save among vulgar manual workers, would do well to ponder the meaning of the strike of bank-employees in Vienna. Bank-employees are white-collar people; in current economic discussion they are included in the large class of intellectual workers. Yet when the Vienna bankers undertook to require longer regular hours and ten hours weekly of overtime, the employees of four of the largest banks walked out, and a lockout presently made the strike general. A street-parade of some 25,000 strikers showed the strength of the movement, and the workers in commercial and insurance establishments, together with many industrial wage-earners, manifested their sympathy with it. The Vienna demonstration is only one of many such protests that have occurred all over Europe, among university professors and students, public-school teachers, civil servants, postal employees and others. In practically every country in Europe intellectual workers are organized in professional syndicates or unions, and many of the organizations expressly recognize the strike as a legitimate weapon of defence. We do not believe that the strike is a means of remedying permanently any social injustice, but if the strike is permissible to any class of wage-earners, it would seem to our unsophisticated vision to be permissible to all.

THE financial gentry of the League of Nations have now perfected their plans for handing over the Hungarians to a dictatorship of the international bankers, on the Austrian model. Hungary is to receive an international loan of 250 million gold crowns, about \$50 million, and Mr. W. P. G. Harding, former Governor of our Federal Reserve Bank, has been selected as financial dictator. All that remains is to parcel out the loan among the banking brethren of the various countries, and start the sweating process among the Hungarian population to provide the interest. American farmers who found their business deflated under Mr. Harding's financial regime will view with equanimity his withdrawal to guide the destinies of eight million foreigners. The rest of our citizens may well regard with some concern the precedent of having an American become a sort of receiver in bankruptcy for a defunct king-business. A financial autocracy managed by aliens is by far the most artificial form of Government yet devised. Already the American people are heavily committed to the maintenance of such forms for the benefit of American privilegees in Latin-America. It

seems a dangerous game to permit our banking gentlemen, with the American flag draped over them, to play with such dictatorships among so many less docile populations in Europe.

It seems not a little strange that Mr. William A. Brady should have joined the forces of the aesthetic protectionists, since it is to Mr. Brady himself that we owe the importation last year of a very interesting foreign play, "The World We Live In," by the Czech dramatists, Joseph and Karl Capek. The complaint of Mr. Brady and those like-minded with him is that in all the arts, and in the art of the theatre in particular, there is a tendency in this country to discriminate between the work of Americans and of foreigners, to the great advantage of the latter. As a matter of course, the only standards properly applicable here are the standards of aesthetics, and any discrimination against Americans is therefore quite as objectionable as discrimination in their favour. Actually the importation of foreign plays and foreign companies within the last few years has done more for the advancement of the art of the theatre in this country than could possibly have been done by the exclusive cultivation of home-talent. The most powerful single influence in this direction has undoubtedly been that exercised by the Moscow Art Theatre, while "The Miracle," if somewhat less significant in the promotion of the dramatic art, has nevertheless made a rich contribution of those elements of romance and mystery which are so characteristic of Old Europe and so notably lacking in our national life. It is of course the collapse of economic life abroad that is chiefly responsible for making New York City a theatrical cosmopolis, and for this one result of the war, we are disposed to be not a little grateful.

THE report that Harvard, Yale, the University of Pennsylvania and a number of other large institutions, are preparing to limit the size of their entering classes because of physical inability to care for any more students, raises some interesting questions regarding the distribution of university attendance. According to figures collected by Dean Walters of Swarthmore College, and published by him in *School and Society*, the gain in full-time students in 134 institutions in 1923 was only three per cent, in comparison with 1922, while in 151 institutions the gain was six per cent in 1923 over 1922, compared with a gain of fourteen per cent in 1922 over 1921. The rapid gains recorded between 1919 and 1921 have not been kept up, and the average annual increase is now back at about the pre-war rate. It appears further from the figures that while the dozen or fifteen largest institutions have grown strongly in numbers, most of those with less than a thousand students each have also gained. Apparently, then, we have a double movement in college and university attendance: a general increase in institutions large and small, with the largest institutions growing the fastest. Were the degrees which represent the same nominal content actually of the same value, it might be possible with co-operative effort to distribute attendance more evenly; but as long as each institution is practically a law unto itself, increased attendance would seem to allow no alternative save increased facilities in buildings and staff or the imposition of discriminating entrance-requirements.

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## TOPICS OF THE TIME.

### MR. DOHENY'S DOGS.

"It reminded me," remarked Mr. Edward L. Doheny, speaking about the oil-investigation, "of old times in the West when one of our dogs at the mating-season joined the wolves. The wolves would howl around our camp at night, and I could hear our own dog among them. It seemed to me when I was on the stand at Washington, that I could hear the bark of my own friends in the pack."

It would be wellnigh impossible, in our opinion, to find a more graphic simile than this for the natural relationship between privilege and political government, and we are glad to leave it with our readers as a summing up of the present condition of American politics. Mr. Doheny expresses the whole idea, and it is necessary only to supplement it with a few details.

It now appears that even before Mr. Fall came to his high office, the arrangements were already virtually consummated whereby public resources worth a billion dollars were to pass into the hands of favoured persons. It was inevitable, therefore, that the transfers to Messrs. Doheny and Sinclair were put through with the utmost speed and secrecy. No publicity was desired until the deals became accomplished facts. The members of Mr. Harding's official family not directly concerned in making the leases did no barking about the camp. They were the Government, Mr. Harding's board of directors, but they discreetly looked aside while their colleagues, Messrs. Fall and Denby, apparently with the verbal approval of Mr. Daugherty, privately signed away, on the dotted line, a billion dollars in public property. Mr. Hughes and Mr. Coolidge, indeed, have taken refuge in the extraordinary plea that the transaction was none of their business!

They are not the only placeholders who have adopted that convenient formula. Five Departments of the Government maintain special bureaux for the investigation and detection of crime. They are the Departments of Justice, the Navy, War, the Treasury and the Post Office. The Department of Justice alone has thousands of secret police, and not long ago it received a special appropriation of a million dollars for investigation of criminal activities. Yet, according to Senator Walsh, not one of these Federal agencies has lifted a finger to aid the investigators of the Senate Committee. None of them has displayed any interest during the many months since the scandalous leases were furtively arrived at. Mr. Daugherty's splendid battalions of spies and provocateurs have not been moved to place anyone under arrest. Mr. Fall has departed unmolested to his handsomely rehabilitated domain in New Mexico. Mr. Denby has gone freely to his home in Michigan. Messrs. Sinclair and Doheny are in no apparent danger of sharing the plight of Mr. Nicholas Zogg, who is still held in jail by Mr. Coolidge's Government for believing that the late war in Europe was not exclusively a struggle of the angels of democracy against the demons of tyranny.

Mr. Coolidge's own attitude is also illuminative, even though it be more than a little humiliating to those who still cherish illusions about the real business of political placeholders. In response to the general sentiment that, inasmuch as in the capacity of chief Federal policeman Mr. Daugherty is a transparent fraud and failure, if not worse, he should be instantly retired to private life, Mr. Coolidge issues feeble statements about sustaining public officials until they are proven guilty; though at the same time he is quietly

at pains to bring together Mr. Daugherty and certain terrified Senators who urge him to resign quietly and save the Grand Old Party. When Mr. Daugherty stubbornly refuses to make himself a voluntary sacrifice in order to end the Administration's embarrassment, Mr. Coolidge dares do nothing. He has appointed two respectable attorneys for some vague purpose of investigating the oil-leases; but if criminal prosecutions are to come, it is difficult to see how these gentlemen will proceed effectively since all the secret police are still captained by the defiant Mr. Daugherty. Indeed Mr. Daugherty is in a position of rare strategic value. Has he not been endorsed by Mr. Coolidge as the head of the powerful Coolidge delegation from Ohio to the Republican National Convention? Are not the blasting secret records of the American Cheka still within his keeping? Has not the Chairman of the Republican National Committee rushed to his defence? It would seem that he holds a sort of permanent moral injunction against any overt move from the zealous candidate in the White House.

At this interesting moment in American history we are reluctantly compelled to take leave of the political brethren. A scandal such as would have wiped out the Government in virtually any of the larger countries in Europe, has left the political establishment here substantially unshaken. The Democratic partisans have lost their chief candidate in the oily flood, and even without this calamity they seemed able to rouse no popular faith or enthusiasm. A cynical friend of ours suggests that before the revelations are over the only course left for them may be to nominate that hale old patent-medicine evangelist, Mr. Bryan, with the slogan, "Oil and water will not mix." There is no real ground-swell setting towards a new political dispensation, or even a reform-movement. In fact the political atmosphere is stagnant, and the public, except for a certain amused curiosity, is indifferent. Possibly the average man has felt the promptings of a wise instinct that short of some cataclysmic upheaval which he is not yet willing to think of, conditions must for the present remain unchanged. He may be reconciled to the fact that in America we must pay the price of a system that sacrifices everything to the stability of our existing economic order. For periods of popular dissatisfaction and unrest we have the innocuous katharsis of the polling-booth, where the humblest citizen may divert himself by voting to turn the rascals out and put the rascals in; or, in other words, to displace Mr. Doheny's dogs by Mr. Doheny's wolves, and again to displace Mr. Doheny's wolves by Mr. Doheny's dogs.

### MELLONTA TAUTA.

In speaking of the United States as a potential cradle of the arts, a friend of ours recently remarked that the chief danger which besets the American artist is that of yielding to the great national love of the commonplace. This expression sums up very well the situation of our artists, actual or potential. The American may, in spite of what our Mexican neighbours aptly term our cafeteria-system of education, manage to become a fairly well-educated, even a cultivated, person—although the chances are hardly in his favour—but he is constantly subject to the pull of his environment towards the commonplace which is the national ideal; and this pull, even though he may be unconscious of it, is debilitating. It is a truism to say that the individual is extremely susceptible to his environment. He may be friendly to it, or he may resist it; and either of these attitudes indicates that its hold upon him is

very strong. Or he may to a greater or less degree manage to become indifferent to it; to be able to regard it objectively, realizing its advantages, its disadvantages and its dangers. Escape from it he can not, without incurring the risk, particularly if he be an artist, of barrenness; because the artist requires a milieu within which and upon which his talents may operate. Art, to be sure, is universal, but as Mr. Muir has pointed out in an article which appeared in these pages, the task of the artist is to reveal the universal in the particular. Therefore, it seems to us that his best hope lies in remaining in the milieu in which he is brought up, the only milieu to which he can ever wholly belong, and doing the best he can with that.

What, then, is the milieu which this country offers as material for the artist? There is little need to consider it in particular, for it has been often discussed in these pages. Moreover, its worst is to be found in photographic detail in the books of Mr. Anderson, Mr. Lewis, and Mr. Masters, to mention only three of the modern nihilists who have given literary form to their disgust with American life. Its best is not so much in what it is as in the possibilities that it offers; but we shall come to that later. Lately it has been crudely but effectively satirized in such plays as "The First Year," "The Potters" and "Beggar on Horseback." It is a product of pioneer life and the machine-age. The pioneer era, with its mad scramble for real estate, its preoccupation with the physical exploitation of a virgin country, and its contemptuous distrust of spiritual interests as antagonistic to its interest in material things, brought about a spiritual impoverishment in which people grew up but could not mature, for maturity is of the spirit. Thus it came about that material success became the national ideal; the successful business man became the national hero; and the present generation of Americans grew up into adult children, very much interested in comforts and conveniences, and pretty well devoid of spiritual resources. The age of the machine, coinciding with the age of the pioneer, operated to intensify this interest in means and forgetfulness of legitimate ends, by affording unlimited opportunity for creative talent to apply itself to the multiplication and standardization of comforts and conveniences, and to the large-scale invention of mechanized diversions of all sorts for the amusement of these grown-up children. It is not without significance that one of the best American works of art is the automobile; for where a people's heart is, there will its creative impulse find amplest expression.

It is not strange that in a country where the motion picture—at its worst—is one of the principal industries, where the radio disseminates, a thousand-fold multiplied, the commonplaces which are the gospel of the multitudes, where reward and recognition go to those who cater to the general taste—it is not strange that in such a country the artist, or for that matter the merely cultivated individual, should feel himself somewhat out of place. To say that good art can not be produced in such an environment is to disqualify such artists as Maurice Prendergast, whose recent death deprived this country of a very fine painter; but it is quite just to say that such an environment is not conducive to art and that such artists as may be produced in it will become artists rather in spite of it than because of it. Yet this environment is undergoing a profound change. The American people are no longer inimical to art; they are either entirely ignorant of it or wistful in their attitude towards it, as towards something beautiful and remote. This is the

best in the American milieu; it allows of hope for the future development of a culture in which art can thrive. It shows that it is not the poverty of the American cultural soil but its lack of cultivation, that makes it unproductive of spiritual fruit. In the light of this fact, the reading clubs, the art clubs, the historical clubs in the towns and villages of our hinterland, however inept and ill-directed their efforts may be, can not be dismissed as simply ridiculous, for they represent a right instinct, a movement towards spiritual health for future generations.

Another thing that is good in the American environment is that Americans are not bound by debilitating traditions. They are bound by foolish laws and by an intolerant and vulgar majority-opinion, but in going away from the European culture which is the national heritage, they escaped at the same time from certain deep-grooved and superannuated conventions which still hamper the people of Europe; and to this extent they are more free than Europeans. This is a European country; therefore its culture will not be, as some cultural nationalists seem to expect, fashioned anew out of whole cloth. Neither, on the other hand, will it be provincial, for provincialism is imitative whereas American culture will be derivative; it will be derived from the European traditions which are our traditions. But in coming back to the culture from which it has departed, this country will bring a new vitality and a freedom from the tyranny of tradition which should have a beneficent effect upon its cultural development.

But whatever we have it in us to be, and may become, it is no doubt first necessary to see ourselves as we are. For this reason our most important literary men during the past decade have been those nihilists of whom we spoke in a recent issue; our most important dramatists have been and are those satirists who show us that the life which we are living and the ideals to which we aspire are commonplace and unlovely; our most important plastic artists are—and to a far greater degree could be—our cartoonists. These are not great artists by any means, but for the time being they are, as a discerning Frenchman said of Béranger, great *for us*. They will not much longer be great even in this way, for their work is about done. The provincial arrogance which saw perfection in everything American, simply because it was American, is passing; we are outgrowing the psychology of the parvenu. Yet our attitude towards the things of the spirit must continue, for a time at least, to be that of the parvenu; it must be a conscious attitude. To supplement and turn to account the work of our nihilists we need writers and artists who will set a high standard of culture and try to make that standard prevail; who will do for this country, in other words, what Goethe did for Germany. Culturally, Goethe was an *arriviste*; he was not at unselfconscious ease in Zion. The man who is born and brought up to a high degree of culture takes it as a matter of course; but Goethe had achieved it through his own efforts, therefore he was able to regard it objectively and gauge its value; and this was useful in the Germany of his day. Goethe's service to the cause of civilization in Germany and the rest of Europe was immeasurable, and the time has now arrived when his work should be of great benefit to the people of this country. The time is ripe, indeed, for this country itself to produce a critic of life such as Goethe was. If occasions make men, then it is not impossible that such a figure will appear, a figure who will show us not what we are but what we may become, and who will supplement the work of the nihilists by giving our national life a positive impetus in the direction of civilization.

## THE LONG, LONG TRAIL.

IN a few days, perhaps before this issue of the *Freeman* reaches its readers, we shall know what Mr. Dawes and his associated experts think ought to be done about the German reparations, the German budget, and German industry generally. Already the creation of a bank of issue, controlled abroad for the profit of Germany's creditors, has been foreshadowed, and something will of course have to be said about the German railways and the French and Belgian occupation of the Ruhr. When the experts shall have made their report, the Reparations Commission will have to pass upon it, but not without first consulting the Governments which the Commission represents; and if by chance the Governments approve, Germany will be invited as a matter of form to acquiesce. As the relations between the experts and the German Government appear to have been cordial from the first, while the bank-plan owes its inception to Dr. Schacht, President of the Reichsbank, official German co-operation may perhaps be presumed; what the Governments at London, Paris, Brussels and Rome may think is not quite so clear.

Assuming that the experts and the Reparations Commission and the Governments reach an accord, what, precisely, will have been accomplished? Every effort, we may be sure, will be made to represent the new scheme as a healing plaster wisely prepared and certain to effect a cure; and if the bankers, before whose altar prayers have long been offered, accept it, the public, without whose support the bankers can do nothing, will be solemnly urged to accept it also. Yet unless Mr. Dawes and his associates possess a vision and a courage altogether different from any that the men who in the past have attacked the problem have exhibited, the new plan, whatever it is, will turn out to be only one more impossible device for attaining impossible ends. The whole business of "making Germany pay" has rested upon the assumption that reparations could be extracted from Germany without according to Germany full liberty of economic recovery; that arbitrary and irrational changes in the economic and political status of peoples, imposed by politicians with armies and navies at their back, would not affect fundamental economic processes or national temper; that a mere mitigation of the reparations-burden would not only cover a multitude of sins, but would also spell prosperity all along the Allied front; that the war-loans, every one of which represented inflated individual profits out of which Governments had already taken, or were continuing to take, a share, were nevertheless to be counted as potential income for somebody; and that whatever else did or did not happen, "reconstruction" must be so managed as to ensure a rake-off for the victors in the war. Every one of these assumptions is false; every one of them has from the first been known to be false by most of the people who have taken the trouble to reflect upon the situation; they will not cease to be false however ingeniously their elements may be turned or rearranged.

The assumptions are false for the simple reason that the foundations upon which they rest are fantastically unsound. Back of the whole problem of European reconstruction and world-reconstruction are the Paris treaties. Those treaties deliberately undertook to secure for the victorious Powers, by means of political sanctions, economic advantages which the normal economic conditions of Europe could never permit; advantages, too, which were dishonest as well as irrational. For the purpose of emphasizing the alleged

guilt of Germany and its allies, the economic importance of the property injured or destroyed was magnified and the amount of reparations to be demanded was guessed at. Territorial changes imposed by force robbed Germany of its colonies and of some of its most valuable natural resources in Europe, condemned Austria to permanent beggary, and added four thousand miles to the frontiers behind which customs-barriers were certain to be erected. The moss was invited to grow upon the wharves and docks of Hamburg, which natural laws had made the greatest Continental port, while much ado was made over giving to Austria, which was left with nothing of importance to sell, an outlet on the Adriatic, and of safeguarding the water-route to Prague, which will never be an appreciable factor in sea-borne trade while the world stands. It was bad enough that such things should have been done in the name of something vociferously described as justice; it was infinitely worse that what was done was intended to give to France an economic advantage to which neither its natural resources nor its industrial development entitled it, to make one blade of grass grow in Germany where two had grown before, and to ensure to the victorious Allies a usurer's profit on what the war had cost.

Now, after five years and more of "peace," we can see something of how the scheme has worked. Germany, which was to be sucked dry of money and goods for the rehabilitation and enlargement of the nations that feared it, is starving and bankrupt, and in going bankrupt has dragged half of Europe in its train. Austria, saddled with a huge international loan which represents only a part of its war-burden, is gasping for breath, and Hungary and Bulgaria are apparently doomed to follow its example. The currency of Poland is all but worthless, and until within a few days the Italian lira has been unable to attain even the value of the heavily depreciated French franc. "Bleeding France," with half of its annual revenue mortgaged for interest on its debt, and a large part of the remainder absorbed by its huge standing army, discloses one of the most gigantic frauds that the world has ever known in the claims for damages upon which rests its raucous plea for reparations, and in the meantime it has more than half strangled the industrial life of the Ruhr. Great Britain, enriched by more than half a million square miles of territory filched from Germany with uplifted eyes and an unctuous "Thy will be done!" is in its fourth winter of vast unemployment, for whose relief a Labour Government proposes to build more cruisers in aid of peace and domination!

It would be an affront to the intelligence of Mr. Dawes and his experts to believe that they do not see, more or less clearly, the causes of the European chaos; but there is no reason whatever to hope that they will go to the roots of the trouble in any recommendations that they may make. They are victims of the system, and will be able, we may be quite sure, to speak only in terms of loans and guarantees and moratoriums and sanctions, of a little less pressure here and a different administration there. They might better have spent their time inhaling the soft air of the Riviera. There will be no healthy life, political or economic, in Europe or elsewhere in the world until the Paris treaties are revised, not in their formal economic or financial provisions only, but from end to end. Revision, however, involves nothing less than the thoroughgoing subordination of politics to economics; of devices by which men scheme, to the fundamental interests by which men live: and for such a task Mr. Dawes and men like him will have no stomach. One hardly dares

to think how many years it may be before experience shall have taught its lesson, or how great must be the suffering before the work of the real war-criminals shall have been undone. As the late Professor Patten pointed out in this paper nearly four years ago, a year would have sufficed to repair all the material injury done by the war, but a century may be needed to repair the injury done by statesmen. The end of the long, long trail will be reached only when, in some large, clear space, clean-swept of the ruin which "peace" has made, intelligence and common sense shall have begun at last their proper task.

### MORALS OF THE MARKET PLACE.

WHILE a superficial survey of current morality, both public and private, may tend towards pessimism, a deeper study finds pessimism inadmissible. Public morals are probably little, if any, worse than they have been heretofore. They could hardly be worse, indeed, since they have always been about as bad as they dared be. The immorality of government, whether in its internal policies or in the conduct of its external relations, can be measured with fair accuracy by the abundance or the exiguity of its opportunities. Government has always been as oppressive, as grasping and dishonest, as it could be with due regard to its own safety. Peoples, like individuals, have their varying moods and tempers. Sometimes they are in the extreme of unreasoning passion, sometimes in the extreme of unreasoning apathy; and either of these moods of mind represents an opportunity for government to give freer rein to its immoral tendencies, while the prevalence of a more nearly normal mood causes government to maintain a greater circumspection in its iniquities.

Within the past ten years, nearly all the peoples of the world have oscillated rather violently from the mood of passion to the mood of apathy. After stimulation, paralysis: this is a law of man's being that somewhat corresponds to the physical law that action and reaction are equal and opposite. The experience of the American people perhaps better illustrates this law than that of any other people, because the stimulus was sharper and the reaction has been stronger. Mr. Wilson, by the exercise of his peculiar gifts, stimulated the impulses of the country into an intemperate and dangerous hysteria; he played upon our people's moral sense with pretensions of the most reckless extravagance, and he aroused in our people a whole fantastic series of the most exorbitant expectations. His pretensions quickly collapsed and the expectations which he had fomented collapsed with them; and the people, thus suddenly let down, as soon as they had made the one impotent gesture of resentment that elected Mr. Harding, lapsed into an apathy as profound as their excitement was acute, and there they still remain.

Both these states of mind were favourable, and the one as much so as the other, to an unprecedented exercise of immorality on the part of the American Government; and, as is always the case, the opportunity was instantly embraced and diligently fostered. The enormities of Mr. Wilson's Government were eagerly accepted by extreme popular passion, and those of Mr. Harding's Government and Mr. Coolidge's are languidly permitted by extreme popular indifference. There is nothing new or unusual about all this, nothing to cause surprise, nothing unpredictable by anyone who understood the essential nature of government, and who was at the same time aware that the law of action and reaction holds true in the moral realm as well as in the physical.

Nor is there anything in this state of affairs, so understood, to give ground for pessimism or despondency. It is a trying moment for the liberal, the ardent and irrepressible reformer, the fervent uplifter, when they see, first, a whole people enthusiastically accepting a monstrous sequence of atrociously immoral public acts which bear upon international affairs; and, second, when they see the same public tamely acquiescing in another series of public acts, quite as flagrant but of a different order and bearing upon domestic affairs. But the experienced and philosophical mind is quite well aware that the people will in time recover and right themselves, as they always do; and that when they do so they will be in possession of new information and a new point of view to assist them in thereafter enforcing a higher morality upon the State, thereby bringing the State just that much nearer to the point of disappearance. Even the American people, trained though they be in American schools, pro-vendered by American newspapers, brought up to respect only the ideals of the market-place—even they will do this, because the self-preserving instinct is in the long run more powerful than Mr. Butler, Mr. Munsey or Mr. Hearst, or than all three together with Mr. Ochs and Mr. Curtis thrown in for good measure; and the self-preserving instinct will compel them to do it. What we have said of the American people is true of other peoples. They have had the same experience, and they too will right themselves in obedience to the same instinct.

Passing now to consider the condition of private morals, we unquestionably find it such as greatly to exercise the superficial spirit of the liberal, the uplifter and the reformer. In spite of the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead law, people will drink; in spite of all manner of restrictive and repressive legislation, they will bet and gamble, dance and make merry; and the best efforts of courts, legislatures, police, churches and conventicles have not succeeded in making sexual irregularities altogether unpopular with the masses. The practical attitude of the citizen towards the law is only less humorously unmoral than the attitude of the law towards the citizen. The main purpose of the law is to "get" somebody; if all this class of legislation were repealed, and nothing were left but such laws as bear upon the offence *malum in se*, and therefore measureably representing the common conscience of mankind, the statute-books would be hardly more than pamphlets. On the other hand, the purpose of the citizen is to break inconvenient laws as often as he can without being "got." The effect of this conflict of purpose is largely to take the question of individual moral responsibility out of one's relation to all matters canvassed by the law; and since practically every detail of one's life is canvassed there, the margin for morality is small, and the liberal, the uplifter and the reformer are sometimes greatly shocked and saddened at the consequences.

Yet by this very means the people are laying up, for the most part unconsciously, a store of experience which in time—and we think in a much shorter time than many suppose—will take effect in a wholesome separation of factitious morals from actual morals. The present merry and nihilistic disregard of both legal and conventional restraint is in great part the beginning of this separation; it is a rebellion caused by the instinctive perception that most of the morality invoked to sanction this restraint is purely factitious and arbitrary. The interpretation of this instinct may often be erratic and unfortunate; but the instinct itself is sound. Hence it is not the part of the experienced mind to be caught by the superficial appearance

of current private morals, but to see in this present time the inevitable and salutary process of precipitating a sounder interpretation of a sound instinct, and thus to argue a closer correspondence hereafter between morals and intelligence.

## MISCELLANY.

I AM always impressed by the deep grooves worn in the wooden change-counters at the ticket-booths in some of the older elevated-railway stations. How much small money must have passed over those counters to leave such marks! There seems something symbolic about them. They are, in their way, a testimony to the nature of our civilization; they are our counterpart of the grooves worn in the stone steps of European cathedrals by the feet of innumerable devotees.

FROM the beginning I have viewed with complete scepticism the noisy effort to "clean up" the city of Philadelphia by force and violence. Such spectacular shams delude only the feeble-minded; they solve no deeply-rooted social problems and do not even remove the symptoms as they appear in the form of prostitution and vice. The series of raids and armed demonstrations in Philadelphia, under the appropriate leadership of the former commander of American marines in Haiti, has reached a culminating indecency in a police-order forbidding the playing of mah jong in the Chinese quarter of the city.

WHEN Sir Harry Johnston visited America, he inveighed against classical studies as "this fetishistic nonsense, this solemn cant, this abominable waste of time and brain-power." Well, certainly the Latin language is now dead enough to suit him. Last week I quoted from an inscription on the tomb of the son of Hannibal's conqueror, and I am sorry to say that the quotation reached my readers in a condition which did not bear out my observations upon it, so I shall try again. Amended and corrected to make sense, it reads, *Qui apicem gessisti, mors perfecit tua ut essent omnia brevia, honos fama virtusque, gloria atque ingenium.*

NATIONS seem somehow to get very picturesque and attractive names for their major scandals, if that be any comfort to a humiliated citizenry. England had the South Sea Bubble, the episode of the lorch "Arrow," the episode of Don Pacifico, and many others. We have done pretty well ourselves. Teapot Dome has a good sound; and before Teapot Dome we had the Star Route frauds and the affair of the Crédit Mobilier. Names like these take half the curse off the transaction by their mellifluousness, and it is strange that they come along so often in this unpleasant connexion.

NEW YORK is now called the artistic centre of the world, and in a sense no doubt it is, for under our present grotesque economic system, art must migrate under economic pressure; art must go where artists can find bread and shelter. Yet in another sense, how much in the way of imponderabilia has to be reckoned with before New York can become a centre of art! Why, for instance, does not a recital like Landowska's in Carnegie Hall last Sunday, with a programme of Bach and Mozart, and Mengelberg conducting, produce just the impression that it would have produced if given in Munich or Dresden?

WHEN I was in London last I looked long at St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, and tried to understand why that really beautiful building did not give me the delight that I would have had from even an inferior building in Bruges

or Brussels. It was because of its setting. Beauty does not belong in London, for the main currents of London's spiritual life are against it, and one continually feels their pull. The city hall of New York is an exquisite building, yet how slight the impression it makes! All the art in the world might come here, but until the main currents of our spiritual life took a different direction, its effectiveness would be reduced by half, at least.

IT has long been a commonplace that a woman who has committed a sexual irregularity fares far worse from other women than from men. Some have wondered at this, but it seems simple enough, if true, and I am by no means sure that it is true. She is perhaps treated more meanly and shabbily by women, but men are none too generous towards her, either—though I must say I think many men are afraid to be as generous as they would like to be, on account of domestic black looks from the women of their own entourage, who could be pretty well depended on to misinterpret their generosity and also to make a satisfactory amount of trouble about it.

As illustrating this disposition on the part of women in general, and also as exhibiting the proverbial logic of womankind which the late Mr. Howells satirized so pleasantly, I may cite the action of one of our myriad women's clubs in cancelling their contract for a lecture from a clever young woman, Miss A, upon hearing that she had in time past enjoyed a liaison with a clever man, Mr. B, who also gives lectures occasionally. Some one put the question whether, since Miss A's lecture was thus unacceptable, the club's authorities would regard a lecture from Mr. B as unacceptable on the same grounds; and the answer was that they would not, but on the contrary, they would be very much pleased to have him speak! This, I think, is rather hard to beat.

STILL, as I say, I think it is a simple matter to account for the unreasoning acerbity that women display in these premises. The instinct is developed by the fact that conduct like Miss A's bears on their livelihood. Women, through no particular fault of their own, have long depended on their sex to yield them a living; and anything which tends to impair or contravene the current theory of marriage and the family—the two institutions which assure and regularize a living thus yielded—has a corresponding halo of gravity thrown about it. The antipathy of these women towards Miss A doubtless had its roots in professionalism; even though she had not actually undercut them economically, her conduct was a misdemeanour of evil example, which if followed generally, might undercut them. One sees precisely the same thing in the attitude of a physician towards an irregular practitioner. Even though his own practice be not depleted, he feels that he must act "for the good of the order."

WHAT is loosely called race-antipathy is to be accounted for in the same way. People as a rule are naturally disposed to keep to their own kind and to regard another race with benevolence or, at most, with indifference. I never happened to hear of an instance of active race-hatred that was not traceable to undercutting (or the fear of it) in economic competition. The Mexican, Chinese, Japanese and Negro illustrate this in our own country; the Jew illustrates it in all countries, and the Armenian in nearly all. No one in New England, for instance, troubles himself about what few Mexicans or Japanese he sees, because there are not enough of them to set up any serious economic competition; but on our own southern border and on the Pacific coast, the case is different. The Negro was well thought of in the north

until he migrated in numbers great enough to make an economic disturbance in certain industrial centres—in Chicago, for instance. I have often wondered how much of the *odium theologicum* that prompted the great religious wars and persecutions is traceable to the same source.

JOURNEYMAN.

## POETRY.

### THE HEIR.

Now all his careful plans are buried deep,  
And his affairs are in unskilful hands  
Of one who greedily seeks love and sleep,  
Who eats and rides, but never understands  
Why this thing should go well or that go ill;  
But thinks the wind should gather in the crop,  
And only lifts a brimming cup to spill  
What some one else collected drop by drop.  
Now, power buried with him, this man lies  
Unable to control the destiny  
Of anything he planned and brought to be,  
While one with no intelligence denies  
The worth of all he loved, and wastes what he  
Wrested from pain and watched with tired eyes.

LOUISE DRISCOLL.

### RENUNCIATION.

I could forget, were I to try,  
The hazel lure in Jennie's eye,  
Descended to her from bright days  
When fans had warded off those rays  
From so defenceless wight as I.  
  
The red and white that mingled lie  
Upon her cheek, those curls that fly  
With wanton care, which others praise,  
I could forget.  
  
And lace, through which one may descry  
Her snowy breast, I could pass by,  
I swear. All tricks the sly minx plays,  
If 'twere not Jennie, all such ways,  
(Though that they charm I'll not deny),  
I could forget.

EARL DANIELS.

### LOS MUERTOS.

What would I do in Los Muertos? Thus would I do were I there:  
I'd find out the girl in Los Muertos with the wealth of the sun  
in her hair;  
I would find her and whisper, "I've wandered over the storm-  
driven sea,  
But through light and through dark, as I journeyed, your  
voice has kept calling to me."

My heart would lift up in Los Muertos, and down through  
the palm-shadowed street  
I would walk with my lass in Los Muertos to the shore where  
the waves ever beat,  
And there in the moonlight I'd murmur, "You have sum-  
moned me over the foam,  
Now here on the beach of Los Muertos kiss me and welcome  
me home."

What would I do in Los Muertos? O Lord, I shall never be  
there;  
Though the wind ever sings of Los Muertos and a lass who  
is stately and fair,  
Though my heart ever turns to Los Muertos where the seas  
and the skies softly gleam,  
Oh, my lass and my love and Los Muertos are only the ghosts  
of my dream!

EDGAR DANIEL KRAMER.

## CHANGEABLE SILK.

IN the American political scheme, so realistically adapted for keeping the bit in the mouth of the common man, the Supreme Court occupies a position of peculiar power in that it is the only political organism which in common repute possesses qualities of divination verging on the supernatural. It wears a halo of antiquity and brings to our matter-of-fact world some of the properties of the old mysteries which were so highly regarded as adjuncts of the ancient State. Its high priests are clad in symbolical robes of silk which no ordinary citizen would dare to adopt. Its decisions not only carry all the finality of a Sibylline prophecy, but the mystic sanctity of such prophecy is attached to them. When the robed prophets of the tribunal retire to consult the legalistic omens, presidents and legislatures fade into insignificance and the gods of social progress bow their heads upon the sacrificial altar. Their utterances are weighted with dicta from the earliest beginnings of law and order, and with a marvellous consistency they measure the problems of our complicated society with yardsticks reverently preserved from ancient days when industry was represented by shepherds tending their flocks on the hill-side and husbandmen scratching the stubborn earth with a stick. In this fashion these oracles, serenely aloof and removed from the clamour of struggling men, conserve our society in the mould of continuity and stability.

The history of our court of finalities is of peculiar interest to the student of what certain European economists have called "the political means." Particularly interesting, as illustrating the mystic divagations of this venerable institution, is its treatment of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. Doubtless a higher consistency has inspired the tribunal in its successive interpretations of this Constitutional postscript. On the surface the court would seem to have reversed itself and re-reversed itself, to have doubled on its tracks, and strayed and wandered to and fro in an amazingly erratic fashion. As a result this simple Amendment, designed to cover a specific situation, has been magnified until it casts its shadow over the entire social horizon.

The Fourteenth Amendment was proposed after the close of the Civil War and was ratified by 1868. Its projection was the result of a crop of post-war statutes, hastily passed in the Southern States, which, as they were interpreted in the North, were designed to rob the liberated slaves of their rights as freedmen. "No State," read the vital clause in the Amendment, ". . . shall deprive any citizen of life, liberty or property without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." The Amendment was strictly a partisan affair. The brilliant Judge Hough of the Federal District Court of New York has pointed out that in all the State legislatures only a single Democrat voted for it—one Barney Cregan of Tammany Hall.

In its early decisions, the Supreme Court took occasion to declare the special function of the Fourteenth Amendment. It would never be applied, insisted the Court in 1877, except in cases involving the rights of freedmen. In another decision the Court announced that the "due process" clause afforded no protection against an unreasonable regulation by the legislature of public-utility rates. "For protection against abuses by the legislature," ran the majority opinion written by Chief Justice Waite, "the people must resort to the polls, not to the courts." It was an era of innocence. The first American case involving the validity of a legislative restriction on women's hours of labour came

before a Massachusetts court in 1876, but the Fourteenth Amendment was never mentioned. The legislation was sustained. As late as 1885 we find the Supreme Court reiterating its language of 1868 and expressing its "increased surprise at the continued misconception of the purpose of the [due process] provision." Thus, as Professor Robert Eugene Cushman of the University of Minnesota has pointed out, the Court began its interpretation of the Amendment by complete acceptance of the doctrine of judicial non-interference with social and economic legislation.

The Court, however, carefully refrained from committing itself to any definition of the terms "due process" and "equal protection"; and thus, as Professor Cushman again points out, it left the way open for a change of mind. In later years, when a more involved application of the Amendment brought forward the relative status of such things as "police power" and "public interest" as opposed, in legislation, to such matters as "liberty of contract" or "property rights," these collateral phrases likewise were never subjected to definition; for, as Justice Holmes remarked in one of his opinions, the Court never defines anything if it can help it. Once or twice, in emergency, the Court took refuge in pious ambiguities that might mean anything or nothing. "Where legislative action is arbitrary and has no reasonable relation to a purpose which it is competent for government to effect, legislation transcends the limit of its power," ran one opinion, written by the cautious Justice Hughes. In another opinion, by Justice Day, the Court conceded that a State legislature might pass a law to protect the health, safety or welfare of the people, but only so far as it did not interfere arbitrarily with "the right to contract and carry on business." As Abe Potash might say, such definitions, like third mortgages, are nix.

## II

By the later 'eighties the personnel of the Court had completely changed from the naive days of '68, for even Supreme Court justices are subject to the laws of mortality. In addition, there was a curious ferment in the times. The industrial revolution was beginning to strain the social order. The simple democracy of earlier days had given place to a stratified society in which the majority in the "lower orders" felt themselves under great disadvantage. As yet there was no demand for a complete readjustment of the social system, but a growing sentiment was manifest for tempering social injustices by remedial laws. Under this impulsion, legislation attempting to deal with concrete social and economic problems was cropping up in the States, and the powerful interests affected by it were becoming active in opposition. The trend of the times was towards laws enabling members of the lower caste to rise above the status of mere beasts of burden, and this evolutionary change highly disturbed many worthy people. Historically, however, it would seem correct enough. As Justice Brandeis has stated in one of his distinguished dissenting opinions, up to 1813 English wage-earners were confronted with laws limiting what they could demand. Up to 1824 they could be punished as criminals if they combined, even without striking, to raise wages, shorten hours, or "affect the business in any way." Up to 1871 it was a crime to go on strike. Not until 1875 was the right of workers to combine conceded by Parliament, and not until 1906 was the ban on peaceful picketing lifted. By the later decades of the last century the toilers were no longer content to secure negative gains from the political power, and in this country, as elsewhere, legislatures were responding more or less reluctantly to their im-

portunities. Laws curbing privilege were actually beginning to replace laws curbing the under dog.

Professor Cushman notes that members of the bar and interests affected by these laws were bringing pressure on the courts for a broader interpretation of the Constitution. Unknown to fame is the name of that shrewd attorney who first persuaded the judicial high priests to dam the rising tide of social legislation with the Fourteenth Amendment. He deserves a niche in the Hall of Fame along with those of Choate and Mr. Elihu Root and other loyal servants of the God of Things as They Are. In 1889 appeared the first nullification of a State law regulating transportation-lines. The court, wrote Judge Hough, in discussing the case in the *Harvard Law Review* in 1919, "practically arraigned legislators at the bar, and passed judgment, not, mark you, on the justice or wisdom, but on the *reason* of what they had done." He adds that of course the term "reason" was not defined. By 1897 the Supreme Court even went so far, however, as to commit itself to a definitive outline of its revised view of the Amendment. This development occurred in a case in which the Court nullified a Louisiana statute forbidding contracts with foreign insurance companies which had not complied with the law of the State. "The liberty mentioned in the Amendment," ran the opinion, "means not only the right of the citizen to be free from the mere physical restraint of his person . . . but to be free in the enjoyment of all his faculties; to be free to use them in all lawful ways; to live and work where he will; to earn his livelihood by any lawful calling; to pursue any livelihood or avocation and for that purpose to enter into all contracts which may be proper, necessary and essential." With this the worthy tribunal formally declared its own sacred opinion of 1868 *spurious*.

Fortified by this opinion and by subsequent decisions, the lesser courts set happily about the work of scrapping social legislation of even the mildest brand. "There is no reasonable ground . . . for fixing upon eight hours in one day as the limit within which a woman can work without injury to her physique," declared the court in Illinois. In New York the court, in killing the statute forbidding night work for women in factories, declared that liberty as defined in the Amendment permitted a woman "to work at any time of the day that suits her." In California a corporation that employed a man for sixty days and then paid him off by presenting him with an old horse, ran afoul of a State law. Under the statute, the court declared indignantly, "the workman of intelligence is treated as an imbecile. He is deprived of the right to make a contract." "In a government like ours," declared the New York Court of Appeals in its stateliest manner, in the course of throwing out an employers' liability law, "theories of public good or necessity are often so plausible or sound as to command popular approval, but the courts are not permitted to forget that law is the only chart by which the Ship of State is to be guided."

## III

In the United States Supreme Court the transformation of the Fourteenth Amendment reached its climax with the famous *Lochner* case, decided in 1905. Under the Fourteenth Amendment an employer was contesting a New York statute limiting the working-hours of bakers to ten hours a day, sixty hours a week. The Court had shortly before declared valid a law creating an eight-hour day for miners; but in the present instance it refused to apply the same principle to bakers, on the ground that "innocuous trades can not be arbitrarily regulated by the legislature." The majority

opinion, written by Justice Peckham, is interesting as an illustration of the mental processes of the supreme arbiters of American life.

"An enactment . . . can not invade the rights of persons and property under the guise of police regulation, where it is not such in fact. . . . The general right to make a contract in relation to his business is guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. . . . The right to purchase and sell labour is part of the liberty protected by this Amendment." To these considerations the Court appended a tender reminder of the right of the individual, "to labour for such time as he may choose," and to this he added that the law involved "neither the safety, the morals nor the welfare of the public."

There is no contention that bakers as a class are not equal in intelligence and capacity to men in other trades or manual occupations, or that they are not able to assert their rights. It may be true that the trade of a baker is not as healthy as some other trades, and is also vastly more healthy than still others. . . . Very likely physicians would not recommend the exercise of that or any other trade for ill health. It is unfortunately true that labour, even in any department, may carry with it the seeds of unhealthiness. But are we all, on that account, at the mercy of legislative majorities?

If it was all right for a baker to work ten hours, asked the Court, why if he worked ten and a half hours would his health be endangered and his bread be rendered unhealthy? Would not limiting his working-hours cripple his ability to support his family? If a baker's hours were to be limited, where would such restrictions stop? With obvious anxiety the Court suggested the possibility of a physician, having finished his legalized daily stint, being faced with the alternatives of sacrificing the life of a fellow-man or becoming a criminal. "We do not believe," concluded Justice Peckham, "in the soundness of the views which upheld this law"; and he wound up with the intimation, drawn from his inner consciousness, that "there was some other motive dominating the legislature than the purpose to subserve the public health and welfare."

On this sort of taradiddle no comment is necessary. Justice Peckham has since been called before a court of final decision beside which the Supreme Court seems relatively impermanent. Justices Harlan, White and Day dissented from his opinion on the ground that voiding that statute set a mischievous precedent which might seriously cripple the power of the States to care for the health and well-being of the citizens. Justice Holmes, who also dissented, held that the validity of the statute was none of the Court's business. "A Constitution," he reminded his colleagues, "is not intended to embody a particular economic theory, whether of paternalism and the organic relation of the citizen to the State, or of *laissez faire*. It is made for people of fundamentally differing views, and the accident of our finding certain opinions natural and familiar, or novel and even shocking, ought not to conclude our judgment upon the question whether the statutes embodying them conflict with the Constitution of the United States." It may be added that through all the record of backing and filling by the majority of the Court where social or economic issues were involved, Justice Brandeis has consistently refused assent to decisions which tended to usurp the legislative power.

The slaughter of social legislation aroused an increasing degree of public rancour. Outcries arose against judicial dictatorship. Theodore Roosevelt, then in the White House and in full eruption, was lending a not unsympathetic ear to the protests, and later gave vent to a contagious slogan, "the recall of judicial de-

cisions." Possibly the high priests of the temple, as they sat in their carven chairs hurling the thunderbolts of the law, were impelled to muse uneasily on the dismal tale of a certain Bourbon monarch, and on the story of that ancient king who defied a rising sea. Perhaps their assurance was disturbed by the barbed dissent of Messrs. Holmes, Harlan, White and Day; and perhaps, under a less hasty judgment, Justice Peckham's opinion looked a bit shabby. At any rate, two years after Justice Peckham's decision in the *Lochner* case, the Court deftly shifted its position once more and decided that an Oregon law decreeing a ten-hour day for women employed in laundries was altogether permissible. An attorney by the name of Louis D. Brandeis had been retained to argue for the law, and he offered such an array of statistics showing that similar legislation was common in every civilized country, that the Court was persuaded to give heed to his extralegal evidence. "We take judicial cognizance of all matters of general knowledge," declared the Court urbanely; and again, "It may not be amiss, before examining the Constitutional question, to notice the course of legislation as well as expressions of opinion from other than judicial sources." By 1915, when a general ten-hour law for manufacturing-establishments in Oregon came up for consideration under the Fourteenth Amendment, the Court had apparently completely forgotten the decision in the *Lochner* case; at least it never mentioned it.

It was inevitable that these vacillations of the highest tribunal should create some confusion in the lower courts. In their efforts to keep up with the intellectual gyrations of the sacred Nine on Capitol Hill, the State judges were forced into odd mental gymnastics. In 1907, in accordance with the *Lochner* decision, the Court of Appeals of New York unanimously declared void a State law forbidding night work for women and minors in factories. The Legislature promptly passed a new law of the same character, and in 1915 the same court placidly sanctioned the measure, with the explanation that during the intervening years there had risen a widespread belief that such work was injurious to health, and in the previous case their attention had not been attracted to facts bearing on the hygienic necessity for such a law! The Supreme Court of Illinois executed a similar somersault in the case of a law establishing a ten-hour day for women. In the maze of conflicting opinions the Fourteenth Amendment was not infrequently utilized to crush and to sustain laws of virtually the same character, in different States, on virtually the same date.

#### IV

Meanwhile the Supreme Court kept a steady course, for over a decade, towards the emancipation of the legislative power of the States. In case after case it withheld the lethal application of the Fourteenth Amendment. It permitted the States to regulate insurance companies, to pass laws guaranteeing bank deposits, to establish rent-laws. It sustained a law forbidding the sale of preservatives containing boric acid. "It is plainly not enough that the subject be regarded as debatable," declared the opinion in this case. "If it be debatable the legislature is entitled to its own judgment, and that judgment is not to be superseded by the verdict of a jury; upon the issue which the legislature has decided. The court tolerated a Maine statute permitting cities to sell fuel at cost, and, despite loud appeals to the Fourteenth Amendment by certain taxpayers, it permitted the Government of North Dakota to issue bonds to establish State warehouses and a State bank. In fact, it appeared, as Professor Cushman re-

marked at the end of 1921, that after long and varied wanderings the Supreme Court had at last brought the famous Amendment safely to anchor in a sure harbour. It had reached the point of acknowledging that the legislatures, in matters of fact and of public necessity, were entitled to their own judgment.

Even while Professor Cushman was penning his prophecy, however, the Court had put to sea and was tacking back on its track again. The composition of the venerable tribunal had changed, and Mr. Harding, that indefatigable collector of old ivory, had made several of his characteristically happy appointments. The first case to mark the change involved an Arizona law forbidding the use of injunctions in labour-disputes, except to prevent the destruction of physical property. The owner of a restaurant in Bisbee had had a dispute about wages with his hands; they had struck, picketed his place, and tried to keep off his customers by distributing handbills setting forth their alleged wrongs; and the proprietor sought to nullify the statute in order to obtain an injunction forcing the recalcitrants to accept his terms or sit at home and pray. Justice Taft's majority opinion, nullifying the State law, was an interesting paean on property-rights. He declared that the "due process" clause had come down from Magna Charta, and he enfolded the restaurant man in that hoary old parchment. Four justices dissented, Justice Brandeis reminding the Court that "the rights of property and the liberty of the individual must be remoulded, from time to time, to meet the changing needs of society."

The Court went even farther back in overthrowing a minimum-wage law for women and children in the District of Columbia, in April, 1923. The majority opinion, written by Justice Sutherland, dragged from its long obscurity the Lochner decision, and also the decision invalidating the Louisiana insurance law. It was true, conceded Justice Sutherland, that the court had once permitted an Oregon statute limiting the hours of employment for women, but this decision was based on the theory of inequality between the sexes, and this "ancient inequality" had now come "almost, if not quite, to the vanishing point." No public body, he contended, could possibly be competent to determine a just minimum wage, for "the amount necessary to maintain a woman in health and morals varies with temperament, habits and thrift." Moreover, such legislation was likely to ruin employers, while the evidence of its beneficiary effects were only "mildly persuasive." Therefore, concluded the Justice, the law was "a naked and arbitrary exercise of power that can not be allowed to stand."

Clearly the Court had gone prancing back to dear old Justice Peckham. It is interesting to note that Chief Justice Taft, in a dissenting opinion, completely overturned his own opinion in the Arizona case of the previous year. "It is not the function of this Court," he declared, "to hold congressional acts invalid because they are passed to carry out economic views which the Court believes to be unwise or unsound." Thus, by a neat handspring, the Chief Justice had landed beside Justice Brandeis.

Here, for the present, ends a long record of errancy. After being dragged hither and yon for over half a century, the Fourteenth Amendment is for the time firmly established as a lever for the assumption of supra-legislative power by the judiciary. Its original purpose of protecting the coloured brethren from peculiar discriminations has been completely bleached out. In its adventurous course with the Amendment, our supreme tribunal has given a rare demonstration in

prestidigitation. It has swallowed its own decisions and eventually regurgitated them in their pristine integrity. It has stood fast on abstract legal concepts and precedents, and later discarded them in favour of a reasonable consideration of essential realities; and, as the wind shifted, it has again shut its eyes to realities and stuck its head back in the comfortable sands of legal abstraction. It has been aggressively dictatorial one year and passively acquiescent the next. "*Mutabile semper*," the motto should read; or, as Abe Potash might remark, "Minds like changeable silk they got it."

T. McN.

## THE RUSSIAN PEASANT AS A REVOLUTIONIST.

ONE day in mid-winter, just short of a century ago, a regiment of the Guards marched out into the Senate Square at St. Petersburg, and set up a shout for *Konstantin* and *Konstitutsia*—that is, for the Grand Duke Constantine as Tsar (in place of his brother Nicholas, who was just stepping into the place of Alexander I), and for a Constitution. The Guards were presently reinforced by a part of the Grenadiers' regiment, by several companies of marines, and by other odds and ends of soldiery and of the civil population, and as the clamour grew in volume, Nicholas sent out negotiators first, and then cannoneers. After a few rounds of grape-shot, the rebels broke and ran, but the fire of the loyal troops followed them across the Basil Bridge and brought many of them to a sudden and final halt. The wounded were left behind, along with the dead, and rumour had it that no very careful distinction was made between the one and the other, when the Chief of Police sent his men out that night to throw the bodies into the ice-holes in the Neva. The revolt, initiated by a few liberal officers of the army and the navy, had ended in disaster; the civilians and the soldiery of the capital had remained for the most part unmoved, and many of those who joined the uprising are known to have believed that the *Konstitutsia* they were fighting for was Constantine's wife!

This story of the Decembrist Revolt will serve very well to illustrate the historic ignorance and indifference of the Russian masses, where politics are concerned. The most conspicuous part of the general revolutionary movement in Russia—that is, the direct attack upon the autocracy—was regularly carried on by a small minority of the people; and yet it does not necessarily follow that the peasant has played in Russian history the rôle of a conservative. If it is commonly believed that the Russian *mushik* has been for centuries almost as inert as the soil he tills, it is because the popular histories have concerned themselves too much with politics, and too little with all the other manifold phases of the life of man in the great eastern plain.

## II

The basic problem of Russian history is the problem of serfdom and the land; and it is just here that the peasant has shown himself repeatedly to be as hot a rebel as one could find in any jail in Europe.

For the student of the agrarian problem in Russia, there would seem to be great possibilities in a comparative study of conditions in Russia and in the United States, with special reference to the significance of the expanding frontier in the history of both countries. However, no such study has yet been attempted. In America, the westward movement and the settlement of new lands in the Mississippi Valley and beyond, is supposed to have operated to maintain very

favourable economic conditions both among the pioneers and in the older communities of the East. In the Muscovite Empire, on the other hand, the masses were depressed into serfdom during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, at the very time when the richest area ever opened to Russian colonization—the “black soil” region of the steppes—was in process of settlement. The economic decline of the Russian peasantry in this period can hardly be explained except on the ground that the Tsars and the nobility were able to develop during these two centuries a political and military organization powerful enough to control both land and labour by force and to skim off at will the profits of production. Theoretically, it was a one-man power—an autocracy—that was growing up at this time in Russia, but actually it was rather a closer organization of the ruling class as a whole, for the exploitation of the peasantry. By and large, the incidence of autocracy was on the serf, and the later colonization of Siberia was no more effective than the earlier settlement of the steppes in improving the condition of the *mushiks* in the mass.

In the Polish-Lithuanian State, which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries included territories extending from the Baltic shore far down toward the Black Sea, the institution of serfdom was brought to legal maturity a century and a half earlier than in Russia, while the movement into the southern borderlands also began at an earlier time, and proceeded thereafter in parallel with the Muscovite advance farther to the eastward. However, the settlement of the steppes was not in either case wholly a matter of the establishment of serf-estates. All along the southern frontier, beyond the lines of the Polish and Russian fortifications, there was a kind of no-man’s-land where runaway serfs mingled with the Asiatic nomads, and formed marauding bands that attacked with equal spirit the manorial estates to the northward, and the Turanian towns on the shore of the Black Sea. It is here among these Cossacks of the border that one must look for the Daniel Boones and the Davy Crocketts of Russian history and Russian romance; it is here that the life of the open border produced a folk-literature which can not seem altogether strange and foreign to anyone who knows some of the cowboy-songs of the American West. Once a man has heard that chant of the Western frontier:

Oh bury me not on the lone prairie,  
Where the wild coyotes will howl over me—

he can fairly smell the smoke of Cossack campfires when he reads:

Bury me, brothers, between three roads,  
The Kiev and the Moscow, and the Murom, famed in story.  
At my feet fasten my horse,  
At my head set a life-bestowing cross,  
In my right hand place my keen sabre.  
Whoever passes by will stop;  
Before my life-bestowing cross will he utter a prayer,  
At the sight of my black steed will he be startled,  
At the sight of my keen sword will he be terrified.  
‘Surely this is a brigand who is buried here!  
A son of the brigand, the bold Stenka Razin!’

### III

It was just as natural that the Cossacks should resist the extension of the servile agricultural system into the steppes, as that the Sioux should attack the wagon-trains of the ‘forty-niners; but in Eastern Europe, there was one factor for which no important counterpart is to be found in America. That is, the extreme economic

oppression within the Russian and Polish frontiers made the peasantry the natural allies of the Cossacks, and the great social wars, when they came, were destined to take essentially the form of a double attack upon serfdom—an attack from below, and an attack from beyond the border. If the Indians of the West could have formed an effective alliance with the Negro slaves of the South, the earlier social wars of Russia might have been in some measure duplicated here in America.

The period of the first great uprising (in which the peasant showed himself to be not exactly a conservative!) is known in Russian history as the Time of Troubles. The dynasty of the Rurikovichs had come to an end in the latter part of the sixteenth century, and the subsequent feuds among the nobles resulted in a pretty complete disintegration of the organized power which had held the peasants in subjection. The response of the peasantry and the Cossacks to the opportunity thus created was general and hearty. The most famous of the partisan leaders, an ex-slave named Bolotnikov, issued proclamations inviting the serfs to slay their masters and appropriate their wives and property, and a considerable part of the country was laid waste before this leader could be captured and hanged. The rebels then gathered around a Tsar-Pretender, who established a vast entrenched camp near Moscow, and shortly earned the title of “the Thief of Tushino.” The situation had now become so serious that the nobility set an example for later times by inviting foreign intervention, first by the Swedes and then by the Poles; indeed, a contemporary has informed us that wealthy Russians preferred, quite naturally, to serve a Polish King, rather than submit to enslavement or execution by their own rebellious serfs. In the end, however, the uprising was suppressed, the house of Romanov was established on the throne, and the process of consolidating the ruling class and enslaving the peasants was resumed once more. The economic, social and political structure had been more severely shaken than it ever was again until 1917, but somehow or other, it had survived.

The seventeenth century saw two other important risings of the Cossacks and the peasants. In the Polish borderlands, where minor disturbances were frequent, the Cossack leader Chmelnicki raised, in 1648, a great rebellion of frontiersmen and serfs, to which the Poles have given the expressive name of “the Ruin.” The subsequent history of the peasant-question in Poland is well worthy of a special accounting, but it will suffice to say here that the failure of the nobility to remedy the condition of the serfs, and the consequent refusal of the serfs to give full support to the nobles, was one of the primary causes of the disintegration and final partition of the Polish State. About twenty years after the beginning of Chmelnicki’s revolt, a certain Stenka Razin (the same whose name appears in the song just quoted) led the Don Cossacks in an uprising which spread to the Tatars of the Volga, and eventually resulted in a huge *jacquerie* in east-central Russia. This time, however, there was no such feud among the nobility as had marked the Time of Troubles, and the disturbance was suppressed, with great loss of life, in less than two years.

### IV

In the eighteenth century, the Russian court-circle undertook to do itself over in the mode of Versailles, and along with the paint and the powder, the furnishings and the costumes, the manners and the morals of the West, it imported some of those liberal ideas to which the Enlightenment had given currency. Indeed,

Great Catherine even convoked in 1766 a Grand Legislative Commission, representing every class in the Empire (except the private serfs, who, of course, were most in need of redress), and assigned to this body the task of combining the 10,000 existing laws, the 1500 *cahiers* from the districts, and her own liberal but vague "Instruction" into a new legal code. After two years of inconsequential discourse, the Commission passed quietly into oblivion; the actual accomplishments of the period were affected by other means than these.

The reign of Catherine is marked by the intensive and extensive development of serfdom to its largest limits. There was no sort of effective check upon the powers of the landlords over their peasants, and the way was cleared for the further geographic expansion of servile agriculture by the acquisition from the Turks of the lands north of the Black Sea. Some notion of the extent to which serfdom dominated the life of the country may be gathered from the fact that in 1796 approximately 34,000,000 persons in a population of some 36,000,000 were in bondage to the State or to private masters.

In this age of the Enlightenment, there was already some perfumed talk of an emancipation, but the real opposition to the servile system came not from the nobles who flirted with the theories of the French philosophers, but from the bondsmen on the estates of these very nobles, and from the Cossacks. At the time of Catherine's accession, according to the statement of the Empress herself, there were local disturbances which involved 150,000 of the serfs on the lands of the nobles and of the Church. Thereafter on the estates, and at the mines and the foundries, which also depended in part upon bonded labour, there were frequent uprisings of such magnitude that military expeditions equipped with artillery had to be employed in the work of pacification. Finally, in 1773, these disturbances culminated in the wholesale rebellion which bears the name of Pugachev, an illiterate Cossack who gave himself out to be the rightful Tsar. This movement began among the Cossacks of the Don and the Ural, and the tide had rolled almost to the gates of Moscow before Pugachev was captured, brought to the Kremlin in an iron cage, and was there publicly quartered for the instruction of the populace.

Here again as in the day of Stenka Razin, the members of the upper classes had had the wit to hold together, instead of fighting among themselves as they had done during the Time of Troubles; but one can not help wondering what might have happened, had this not been so. The convocation of the Grand Legislative Commission in 1766 was a fair enough equivalent for the assembling of the French Estates General in 1789; if any considerable number of nobles and burghers had desired a political reform, the Government might have been strained and weakened by a liberal-conservative contest, as it was in France; and the popular rising which followed five years later in Russia might have been as effective as the mass-movement was in France, in bringing about a thorough reformation of the Government and a settlement—of sorts—of the land-question. In Russia it was not the mass that was inert; the element most conspicuously lacking here, and most conspicuously present in France, was a liberal sentiment sufficiently strong to divide and weaken the favoured minority among the population; and just as long as this Russian minority retained its solidity and coherence, the revolts of the mass were predestined for defeat.

## V

Pugachev's rebellion did not give the serfs the land and liberty they wanted, but neither did the suppression of this rebellion put a period to the risings of the populace. In the nineteenth century, the Cossacks no longer figure as allies of the peasantry; they are either dispersed and absorbed into the general population, or organized by the Government as a most effective force for the dragooning of the people; and in this latter capacity, there is abundant work for them to do.

At the beginning of the reign of Nicholas I, the average number of local *jacqueries* per year was eight; for the years 1845-49, the annual average was thirty-four, and the total number for the period 1828-54, as given in the archives of the Ministry of Home Affairs, is 547. These disturbances were not simply local misunderstandings between the serfs and their lords, but uprisings of whole villages or groups of villages, about half of which were quelled, not by the police, but by the military forces, with frequent bloodshed. In fact, things had come to such a pass that Alexander II was moved to say, shortly after his accession: "it would be better to abolish serfdom from above than to wait till the liberation begins from below."

Besides "the red glow in the sky," there were other influences operating to promote the emancipation—as, for example, the belief of many of the landlords that it would be to their own advantage to substitute rent-paying tenants and hired labourers for the serfs on their estates. There is no point in attempting here a discussion of these influences, or of the long and laborious process by which the emancipation was carried out. The central fact is that great masses of the peasants received such small allotments (twenty per cent smaller, on the average, than those that they had previously cultivated for themselves), and were compelled to pay so dearly for their plots, that they could not make ends meet except by renting more land from the landlords, or by working for wages, a part of each year, on the estates or in the industrial centres. The growth of the population aggravated these conditions, until the average allotment at the opening of the twentieth century was only a little more than half as large as it had been just before the emancipation; the number of horses per thousand farms had decreased by one-third since 1870; in the 'nineties, 70.7 per cent of the peasants—45,358,078 individuals—were not producing enough grain for their own subsistence, and in 1903, Witte's Agrarian Commission reported that "when the harvest is normal, the amount of nutriment obtainable by the peasant is, on the average, thirty per cent below the minimum physiologically requisite to maintain the strength of an adult worker on the land." That the strength of the adult workers on the land was not maintained, is well enough attested by the fact that the percentage of army-recruits rejected for physical defects was half again as great in 1894-1901 as in 1874-83—and this in spite of the circumstance that the very rapid expansion of the army necessitated a lowering of the standard of fitness. In view of these developments, it can hardly be said, then, without some qualification, that the peasantry had been emancipated.

In the case of the private serfs, the laws of the 'sixties left the redemption-proceedings to be initiated locally by the landlords and their peasants, or by either party acting separately, and so objectionable did the peasants find the terms of the emancipation that many of them would not claim the great boon that was offered. Sixty-three per cent of all the proceed-

ings begun in the period 1861-75 were initiated by landlords for the purpose of forcing their serfs to redeem the lands allotted them at the terms that had been fixed, and in 1882 a new law had to be promulgated requiring the 3,000,000 serfs who still remained in a state of "temporary obligation" to undertake the redemption of at least the legal minimum of land.

However, the peasants did not confine themselves to a merely passive opposition; in many places they rose in force, and within two years after the publication of the chief emancipation act, the Department of the Interior was called upon to suppress more than one thousand serious disturbances. After a period of comparative quiescence, there was a renewal of serious outbreaks in 1870, and from that time on they continued to increase until the movement flamed up suddenly to huge proportions during the Revolution of 1905. The forces opposed to an economic and social revolution were seriously disorganized by the Russo-Japanese War and by the falling-out of the liberals and the conservatives on the question of political reform, and the peasants thereupon seized the opportunity to loot and burn manorial establishments all over Russia (as many as two thousand in a single month), and to appropriate the manorial lands. The imminence of a complete social overturn soon brought most of the liberals into comparative harmony with the conservative element, and the peasant risings were eventually suppressed with the greatest severity by the soldiery. In this period, the "curve of political reform," with the rise and decline of the Duma, appears to follow very nicely the rising and the declining fortunes of the battle fought out by the peasantry and the urban proletariat, with some help in the beginning from the liberals, in the field of direct action.

The part played by the peasantry in the Revolution of 1917-18, and the part that they have played and are still destined to play in the construction of a new agrarian system, is a fascinating subject of study for anyone who wishes to penetrate somewhat beyond the outward seeming of events in Russia. To such a man, if he has read the testimony of the past, it will be obvious that from the earliest days of serfdom, the peasant has had notions of his own about land and liberty, and has attempted again and again to put these notions into practice. The earlier history of the peasantry, as it has been interpreted here, is the history of an active and aggressive element in the society of Russia, and it is at least possible that a man who went now "to the people" would discover that the *muzhik* had made a great deal of history on his own account during these last eventful years.

GEROID TANQUARY ROBINSON.

### A SNOWSTORM IN ARCADY.

YESTERDAY the frozen lake gleamed between the naked tree trunks which threw their long shadows across the hill-side. The green roof of the cottage was flagreed with silver frost, like a piece of rare brocade. The bare ground was dry and brown, with occasional piles of dead leaves where grass and flowers had lately flourished. Only the evergreens showed signs of life as they spread their protecting branches.

But now what fairies have worked their magic in Arcady? Overnight it has grown to be a different world. The morning shows the snow falling softly and covering tree and vine and shrub. One could almost imagine the thorn-trees again in bloom; their spreading branches are so laden with snow. Last year's birds' nests look like tiny black huts with clean-cut white roofs, or like Negro mamies' faces, surmounted by spotless caps. The evergreen

trees are transformed; now they proudly stretch forth their long green arms, tenderly holding their burden of glistening snow. A bird-house swings from an apple bough, looking like a tiny cave covered with white stalactites, and just above a pair of bluejays snuggle, their heads tucked into their downy feathers. Suddenly their heads emerge—a quick glance, a flutter, and with a swoop they alight upon a barberry bush, scattering the snow from its bronze foliage. Ravenously they peck at the scarlet berries, but only for a moment or two, then dart away screaming—blue flashes across the leaden sky!

Descending to the lake as the sun emerges, skirting the grey rocks and the shrubs, and ploughing through great soft white drifts, I startle old Molly Cottontail, a brown rabbit, nestling under the warm snow. Swiftly she scurries across my path, leaving a whirlpool of flying snow to mark each mad leap. The sight of her reminds me of the fruitless hours that the old setter, Joe, spent last summer chasing her through the rose gardens and over the wild flowers until she escaped into a disused drain-pipe, where he would stand with exasperating patience waiting for her to come out. Poor old Joe will not accept the sad truth that he has lost his speed!

As I reach the old landing, I look out upon an unknown scene. How strange it seems! Can it be the same lake that I have known so well in spring, in summer and in autumn? The distances seem so great. As the sun gleams through the flurries of snow, the barns on the distant farms gleam like rubies. The encircling shore is quite different without its fringe of gold or green or brown! The neighbouring cottages seem so near now that they are no longer hidden in the leafy woods. Close beside me some sturdy vines have escaped from their white blankets and straggle lattice-like up the steep bank. The shore is a mass of bristling icicles. I think I see one tumbling from the bank; but no, it moves stealthily across the snow, and as it crosses the brown vines, I find that it is a stoat, a weasel, almost as white as the snow about it. It moves quietly, its pointed nose just above the snow. How beautiful is this animal in winter, how different from the insignificant little weasel which we know so well in summer!

The rocks, polished by the dashing waves, seem like huge vases, their grey and brown sides gleaming through the transparent ice which encrusts them, the frozen spray cascading, like bouquets of flowers, from their tops. Hugging the shore, the ice is crisp, transparent, deepening to blue through which the golden sands and pebbles gleam like topaz, aquamarines, agates and garnets. Beyond is a sapphire belt which the wind has swept clear of snow and, farther still, unfrozen pools like dark oval mirrors. The swift flying terns, their bodies iridescent in the sunlight, and the grey and white gulls dip and soar up and down the banks. Far more friendly are they than during the warmer months.

To the east, the shore slopes gently to the inlet and its line is broken by mounds of snow in all fantastic shapes, as if the wind had tried to make snow men, huts and forts, but had tired of the sport. Here the hop-trees still hold their seed-pods topped with white snow, like cotton bursting from its bolls, and the long graceful branches of the hackberry, with its slender stems, bow almost to the ground. In the inlet, the dry rushes bend beneath their burden of snow and sway rhythmically in the fitful gusts. Directly across, on the stern bluff of sandstone, the evergreens and pines look like pyramids of waving ostrich plumes, while on its steep banks the leafless white birches stand like silent sentinels.

Farther on, as far as the eye can reach, the once golden beach gleams white beneath the stark and stunted trees. The whole field of ice and snow reflects the sunlight until it seems a huge opal, vying with the sun-kissed clouds in

colour. Sugar Loaf, capped by dark pines, seen fitfully as the veil of snow drifts by, reminds one of the solemn Sphinx, the white spirits of the ice kissing her feet in their eagerness for the answers to their questions. The deserted cottages along the shore are wrapped like ghosts in their winter shrouds. A flock of crows comes into view in strong contrast to the white pall beneath them, and their caw-caw is the only sound which intrudes upon the perfect quiet. The snow ceases and twilight tempts us into the little village, which has turned into a thing of beauty over night. Narrow paths bordered by high drifts mark the roads, above which we catch the rosy glow of the cottage lamps; and the church upon the hilltop seems to smile benignly upon us.

The crescent moon hangs like a silver bow, and just above lonely Venus holds her golden sway, the only star in the vast firmament.

HELEN SWIFT.

### IDLENESS.

THEY say idleness is the gift of the immortals: in fact, in that serene and Olympian calm which the idlers of purest breed call their own, there is something which gives them a certain likeness to the gods. It is maintained that work sanctifies man. Hence, doubtless, the popular saying: "To God our praying, to the hammer the swaying." Nevertheless, I hold my own views on this point. I believe, in fact, that one can say a prayer while one works hard striking the anvil. But the true prayer, that prayer without words, which puts us in contact with the Supreme Being by means of the mystic idea, can not exist unless it has idleness as its foundation. Idleness, then, not only exalts man because it invests him with a certain likeness to those beings who enjoy the privilege of immortality, but, in spite of all that which is declaimed against it, it also is one of the best roads by which to reach heaven.

Idleness is a goddess to whom an infinite number of worshippers pay homage, but her religion is a silent and practical one; her priests preach it by example. Nature itself, in its days of sun and mild temperature, contributes towards spreading her cult with irresistible persuasive force. It is a truism to say that the beatitude of the just is a boundless happiness, which we can neither understand nor satisfactorily define. Human intelligence, dulled by its contact with matter, does not grasp that which is purely spiritual, and this has been the reason why each one of us represents heaven to himself not as it is but as he wishes it were.

I imagine it as an absolute calm, as the prime element of enjoyment: with the void all around us, the soul stripped of two of its three faculties, will and memory, leaves understanding (which is the spirit focused on itself) to enjoy contemplating and feeling its proper self. That is the reason why I am not in accord with the poet, who says:

*Heureux les morts, éternels paresseux!*

That eternal idleness of the corpse, comfortably stretched out on the soft earth of the grave, does not displease me altogether. Perhaps it would be my beau-ideal if in death I could be conscious of my rest. Can it be that the soul, detached from matter, would hover over the grave, enjoying the rest of the body which on earth was its dwelling-place? If this were so, I should certainly be a partisan of the frequently quoted "tranquillity of the tomb"—that favourite theme of the elegiac and weeping poets, the constant aspiration of all superior and misunderstood souls. But—death!

For in that sleep of death, what dreams may come  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause—

Hamlet asks in his famous monologue, without, however, having received an answer yet from anybody. We turn, then, to the idleness of life, which is the most positive thing.

The best proof that idleness is an instinctive aspiration of man, and one of his greatest boons, is the fact that, as this miserable world is organized, it can not be practised, or, at any rate, that its practice is so dangerous that it invariably offers the poorhouse as a perspective. And the world, as we know it to-day, is the most absolute antithesis to the paradise of our forefathers, so much so, in fact, that no demonstration is needed to see the evidence thereof.

However, the sky, the light, the air, the woods, the rivers, the flowers, the mountains—in short, all creation—tell us that idleness exists. Where does the change occur? Man ate the forbidden fruit. He craved to know, and after that he lost the privilege of being idle any longer.

"Work, bestir yourself, be active, in order to eat." This is as horrible as if they told us, "Work that pump, sweat, toil, in order to obtain the air you need to breathe." How many times, when thinking of all the blessings lost through the fall of our primeval fathers, have I exclaimed from the bottom of my heart, parodying Don Quixote in his well-known speech on the Golden Age: "Happy Age! Happy centuries! When man did not know time because he did not know death, and when, motionless and calm, he enjoyed the voluptuousness of being idle in the plenitude of his powers!" We fell from the throne where God had seated us. We are not the masters of creation any longer, but only a part of it, wheels of the great mechanism, more or less important, but wheels for all that, condemned to whirl around, geared into each other, moaning, creaking, trying hard to resist our inexorable fate.

Often idleness is the heavenly goddess, the happy man's chosen friend, who comes to our side and envelops us in the soft atmosphere of the languishment which surrounds her, sits down with us, and speaks to us in that divine tongue: the transmission of ideas through the ether, thanks to which we never need take the trouble of moving our lips to articulate words. I have seen her many times, floating around me and carrying me away from the world's activities, where I feel so ill at ease. But her step on earth ever is of the lightest; she brings to us the perfume of bliss so as to make us feel her absence all the more. How chaste, how mysterious, how full of sweet modesty human idleness always is! Look at activity, racing through the world like a dishevelled Bacchante, giving material and vulgar form to its ideas and dreams! Look at the public market, quoting these activities, selling them for the price of gold! Holy illusions, pure sensations, mad fantasies, strange ideas—all those mysterious children of the spirit are hardly born when they are seized by matter, its stupid partner, and nakedly exposed, shivering and blushing, to the gaze of the ignorant crowd. I should like to think for myself, enjoy my own pleasures, weep over my own pains, hushed in the arms of idleness, and not be constrained to amuse somebody else with the tale of my thoughts or my innermost hidden sensations.

We cross from one eternity of past rest to another future eternity by a bridge, which is none other than life. When on that bridge, what is the use of agitating ourselves by the illusion that we do something by agitating ourselves? I have seen a drop of water with a microscope, and in that drop those hardly perceptible insects, whose existence is so short that in one hour they live five or six generations, and looking at them I said as they moved: "Will these miserable creatures think they are doing anything by moving?" In order to make us toil in the world, it would be necessary that some one pull a cap over our heads which would hide the heavens, so that the comparison with its immensity should not be so noticeable to our littleness.

I want to be consistent with my indefinite past and future, and cross that bridge of life, flung across two eternities, as quietly as possible. I wish—— But I wish for so many things that, only by enumerating them, I could write an article as long as from this very instant—to to-morrow! But surely that is not my purpose.

However, I remember one occasion, when I was sitting on a hill whence a boundless and restful horizon spread before my eyes, my soul full of quiet and sweet voluptuousness, immovable as the rocks which rose around me, and of which I seemed to be one, one that thought and felt as I believe all things of the earth feel and, maybe, think. So keenly did I then appreciate the joy of quietude and perpetual immobility of that supreme idleness as perfect as we idlers dream it, that I resolved to write an ode and to sing its many charms, which are unknown to the restless multitude. My decision was taken immediately; but when I began to move in order to do it, I bethought myself, and I bethought myself well; the best hymn to idleness must be that which has not been written, nor ever will be written. The man capable of attempting it would place himself in contradiction to his own ideas, and so I did not write it. At this very instant I remember what I thought on that day. I meant to expatiate in praise of idleness, in order to propagandize its cult. But how can one convince by words if one disproves by example? How can one exalt idleness while working? Impossible! The best proof of the firmness of the beliefs which I profess is to put a period here and to go to bed. A thousand pities that I am not writing this sitting up in bed, because I then need not do more than rest my head, open my hand and let my pen drop!

GUSTAVO DE BECQUER.

(Translated from the Spanish by Edgar Speyer.)

## THE THEATRE.

### HIGH JINKS.

IN "Beggar on Horseback" those two playboys of the western stage, Messrs. George S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly, have cast discretion to the winds and indulged in such a fantasia of quips and cranks and wanton wiles that their audiences are left gasping with amazement and laughter. Their elaborate production is related at once to Mr. Flo Ziegfeld, his "Follies," to Mr. Bernard Shaw, to Hermann the Great and to the "Tales of Hoffmann," and as it gambols along a good part of the disabilities and the hokum of what is called civilized life comes within the scope of its galloping burlesque.

The antic creation begins conventionally enough. Neil McRae is a young composer who is compelled to dissipate his genius in hack work, and his physician and the girl who lives across the hall from his studio advise him to free himself from necessity by marrying Gladys Cady, a young woman from his home town, whose father has evolved into the president of the Cady International Overhead and Underground Aerial Widget Manufacturing Company. In some depression he is lured into proposing to Gladys over the telephone, and then, having taken a pill prescribed by the doctor, he sinks into his armchair and closes his eyes.

Immediately the wedding procession marches up the aisles of the theatre, Neil is jazzed through the ceremony and whisked off to Monte Carlo, and then whisked back again to dwell in a terrible marble palace with the whole vulgar tribe of Cady. In the morning he enters on his filial duties at the offices of the Widget Trust. His first conscientious impulse is to secure a pencil, but the business is so splendidly systematized

that although he goes from department to department filling out many square yards of requisition blanks, he is never able to get the pencil and begin work, and he still lacks it after he has stumbled into a directors' meeting, and, by making a speech about nothing at all secures a bonus of a million dollars. Obviously between business and the exacting social and domestic schedule, Neil is completely divorced from his own work. Memories distress him. The alcove of a bed-lamite hotel, where he is dining with his wife, is suddenly transformed into a quiet cottage where he is living with the girl across the hall and happily completing his symphony on a capital of \$177. In contrast, he immediately finds himself dumped back into the marble palace where his wife has hired a corps of dancing masters to bedevil him into the social graces. In a burst of happy self-assertion he drives them out and takes up a paper-knife to purge the world of Cadys. His wife is engaged in tearing up his *magnum opus*; his mother-in-law is droning dismal hymns out of tune; his father-in-law, a telephone strapped to his chest to keep in instant touch with the office, is knocking an imaginary golf-ball about the parlour; his brother-in-law is getting louder and louder results from the noisiest radio-machine made. Neil murders them all, pleasurably, one by one. An instant later the theatre is filled with a clamour of newsboys distributing among the audience news-extras containing a more than full account of the crime. The newspaper, even down to the editorial beginning, "Washington was a greater man than Lincoln," so horribly resembles the favourite daily of Henry Dubb that one has a melancholy feeling that perhaps Messrs. Kaufman and Connelly are carrying realism too far.

Of course the unfortunate genius is haled to trial, and one is not greatly astonished to find that the judge is really old man Cady, the prosecuting attorney his son, the chief witness Mrs. Cady and the jurors the expelled dancing masters. Neil's defence is his music, but the procedure is not exactly orthodox, and the music is almost forgotten. In the end, as his symphony has been torn up, he is permitted to perform the music of a pantomime which he had devised with the girl across the hall.

Immediately the pantomime begins. The courtroom bourgeons into a royal bedchamber, containing two dissociated couches, with windows open on a moon-flooded garden. The princess of Xanadu comes to bed. She is a princess out of a more gracious world than the royal dumplings of real life. The room is desolate after her bed-curtains have concealed her. Presently, behold the prince. He is weary and bored, but while he is yawning himself to bed the moonlight lures him, and in a spirit of adventure he dons a disguise and goes out in search of romance. After a time the princess reappears. The spell of the moon is upon her too, and since her spouse is apparently sleeping, she is moved to disguise herself and seek adventure. Next we see the prince seated languidly beneath a lamp on a rose-draped bench in a public square. Romance is lagging; but the princess, a dancing sprite of mystery, fulfils the promise of the moon. She is not easy to capture, and even when he lures her to the bench she is shy and aloof until he thinks of the expedient of blowing out the street lamp. In that sweet darkness she yields to his kisses, though romance still labours under some disability because of a zealous policeman who persistently relights the lamp, until the prince thoughtfully breaks the lamp post in two. He is a Herculean person, like Albert of Belgium, though of course he looks more intelligent.

Eventually dawn spies upon them and the princess

flees. Back in the bedchamber she darts happily to her pillow. After an interval the prince appears and tiptoes cautiously to his bed. Presently their attendants rouse them for breakfast, but they are so bemused with the ardour of their adventure that they almost forget the ceremonial morning kiss. Each is still retasting the flavour of forbidden fruit in the moonlight, and as the curtain falls each is sitting, completely oblivious of the other, surreptitiously fondling a rose. The moral of all this seems to be that romance is romance, and home is home, and never the twain shall meet.

This charming interpolation is the product of Mr. Deems Taylor. His music is gracious and sympathetic, but Judge Cady fears it is high-brow stuff ("You gotta give 'em what they want!"), and the jurors cry "Guilty!" Neil is sentenced to a life-service in Cady's factory of all the arts, for, as the Judge remarks, "Everybody must work." We have a glimpse of the day-shift of novelists, composers, artists and poets in this formidable institution grinding out their popular masterpieces at machine speed. The novelist is dictating a new novel by reading from his last one, and an attendant explains that under the old hand-work system "they had to do 'em all over again each time."

Thus, in accord with the old proverb, Messrs. Kaufman and Connelly set their beggar on horseback and let him ride to the Devil. They deftly bring him back to earth, however, and the ending conforms happily to the established proprieties of the theatre. In transit, his erratic, headlong gallop yields a superabundance of hilarious surprise. Mr. Roland Young as the central character performs with his usual easy competence, his numerous associates support their parts agreeably, and the stage-mechanics are handled so unobtrusively that the scenes flow into one another as naturally as in a mad dream. As long as these two authors can come to market with such wares, even the most jaded playgoer may hope to be jolted out of his weariness.

HAROLD KELLOCK.

## BOOKS.

### WOMAN'S PLACE.

IN looking over recent anti-feminist literature, it is interesting to note that intense conservatism in the matter of sex-equality seems to go hand in hand with an unquestioning acceptance of existing political, social and economic conditions. This being the case, it is not surprising to find that the writers' thought on their subject is confused and illogical; for a mind that is not capable of getting at the root of a question is hardly fitted to discuss intelligently its superficial aspects. According to anti-feminist writers, the interests of the State depend upon the careful preservation of those economic and legal disabilities which women have been throwing off so rapidly in the last few years. Women must be made to surrender to men all occupations outside the home, and to confine themselves to marriage and the bearing and rearing of children. In theory this position is logical if one accept the premises; practically, its logic is questionable. The bald fact is that the society about which these writers are solicitous has so intensified economic exploitation as to force into industry millions of women who might be quite content to be homekeepers. This same society, moreover, has during the past few years killed off its potential husbands and fathers in such enormous numbers that the numerical disproportion between the sexes would make impossible the carrying out of the anti-

feminist programme on any basis save that of polygamy. From the point of view of the State's interest, polygamy may be—I would even say is—extremely desirable, since it would supply an increased amount of human material to be exploited in industry and war; but unfortunately the same economic system which forces women into industry makes it impossible for the great majority of men to support even one family in decent comfort, and therefore it is hardly to be supposed that the idea of polygamy would have a strong popular appeal. I have not seen these practical difficulties discussed in any anti-feminist book which I have ever read.

There is no doubt that marriage is the strongest bulwark of the present economic system; not because it is "woman's mission" but because life under the system is precarious at best, and the man who has undertaken the support of a family has given hostages to fortune; he has a vested interest in the system. The fact that the incidence of marriage falls quite as heavily upon men as upon women is overlooked by writers like Gina Lombroso,<sup>1</sup> Anthony M. Ludovici<sup>2</sup> and A. R. Wadia,<sup>3</sup> who have recently written in defence of the theory that woman's place is the home. All these writers believe that the home is menaced by the emancipation of women; none of them considers the fact that it is menaced quite as much by men's bondage to an economic system which makes living so difficult that undertaking to maintain a family is an enterprise either of foolhardiness or of heroism. The absurdities into which superficial discussion of such a question may lead are clearly shown in the case of Mr. Wadia, who seems sincerely to believe that it is the feminist influence which keeps millions of women "sweating in the factory." This theory does the feminists too much honour. Even their emancipating influence could hardly keep women toiling for long hours at small wages. Mr. Wadia laments the effect which this labour is bound to produce upon future generations, and intimates that women should show more concern for posterity. But the women and men who "sweat in industry" have little time to consider the future welfare of humanity; they are too much preoccupied with the struggle to earn their daily bread. Even if, as Mr. Wadia suggests, the employment of women and children defeats its own end by reducing the wages of men, that fact has little bearing on individual cases. If a family be faced with starvation, its potential breadwinners, male or female, will bestir themselves to earn money as best they can, without considering the possible effect of their action on the general labour-market.

It seems strange that Mr. Wadia, who seems to be well informed concerning the history of the industrial revolution, does not perceive that there may have been some causal connexion between the revolution and the rise of feminism. The feminist movement, according to Mr. Wadia himself, is a century and a quarter old; that is, it began soon after the industrial revolution. Why has it never occurred to him that feminism, far from pushing women into industry, may have arisen from their having been pushed into it? The work of Mr. Thorold Rogers and of the Hammonds would strongly suggest to him grounds for believing that when the revolution took place in England, it found ready for exploitation large numbers of men and women who had been driven from the land and crowded together in destitution in the slums of the

<sup>1</sup> "The Soul of Woman." Gina Lombroso. New York: E. P. Dutton & Company. \$2.50.

<sup>2</sup> "Woman; a Vindication." Anthony M. Ludovici. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.00.

<sup>3</sup> "The Ethics of Feminism." A. R. Wadia. New York: George H. Doran Company. \$3.50.

cities. These men and women were forced into machine-industry because the machine was supplanting home-industry, and industry was the only way open to them to make a living. Working side by side with men in the factory, women found that certain social and legal disabilities which hitherto had been endurable, however humiliating, were intolerable under their changed economic condition. Thus feminism may, in a sense, be said to be a product of the industrial revolution. Mr. Wadia is not entirely anti-feminist; he is willing to concede women everything but freedom, and he believes that feminism grew out of injustice. This is true; but it grew out of the fundamental injustice which took shape, for the individual, as sheer economic necessity. In passing, it may be remarked that the fact that women undercut the wages of men in industry is due not to their economic independence but to their remaining semi-dependence upon husband or father. That they *can* undercut men indicates a glutted labour-market; and a consideration of this question would lead to the point where all discussion of feminism must logically end; that is to say, the need for the economic emancipation of human beings.

For the present I will leave that point, and return to the argument for the compulsion of women into one single sphere of activity, namely: marriage, and motherhood. This argument is based primarily on the view of woman not as an individual but as a function; a survival which is perhaps natural in a society which a century ago was speaking of women as "the sex." Women, according to this view, were born to be mothers, and anything which leads them away from the conventional marriage and from the bearing and rearing of children, is contrary to the best interests of the State and of society.<sup>1</sup> This can not be taken as a glorification of motherhood, for I find no hint in any of these books that motherhood is either beautiful or desirable save in connexion with marriage. The idea defended by Grete Meisel-Hess, that the birth of a child can not possibly, under any circumstances, be immoral, finds no reflection in these pages. The concern of the authors is with motherhood in wedlock, as a contributory factor in the perpetuation of the State; and with the sacrifice of women to the preservation of established institutions.

This being the line of argument, the next step would logically be the examination of the institutions that are to be preserved, and the demonstration that they are worth the indicated sacrifice of individual freedom. "For us to love our country," said Burke, "our country ought to be lovely"; and for us to sacrifice our freedom to the State, the State ought to be worth the sacrifice. Even though a close examination of the institutions to which these writers would sacrifice the growing freedom of women might prove them all to be sound and worthy, certainly such a critical examination is in order in a book which demands that women devote their lives chiefly or exclusively to the preservation of those institutions. But into this question, as I have remarked, these critics of feminism do not venture; and their failure to do so besets their position with difficulties.

They would be more liable to criticism, perhaps, if the feminists themselves were not open to the same charge. The fact is that there has been little enough fundamental thinking on either side of the feminist controversy. Most discussion of the subject has been superficial and debilitated by sentimentalism. The ad-

vantage of the feminists has lain for the most part in that they had justice on their side, although they are fast carrying their propaganda to the point of intolerant sectarianism where they have not even that. One largely finds a similar sectarian temper in these books. There is much exhorting, a good deal of scolding, and not a little threatening with dire consequences if misguided humanity does not mend its ways and put woman back in her place. Mrs. Lombroso and Mr. Wadia say much about woman's great mission. Mr. Ludovici divides women arbitrarily into positive and negative types—sheep and goats—and proceeds to draw a whole bookful of astounding conclusions. In fact, Mr. Ludovici is frankly salvationist, and like most salvationists he is often ridiculous. The consensus among these authors seems to be that women are inferior to men but have a higher mission: a view which does little honour to the intelligence of Providence.

When Mrs. Lombroso and Mr. Ludovici begin to tell us what woman is, one is bound to wish they had been content with telling us what she ought to do. Mrs. Lombroso's woman is a cross between an imbecile and a saint; Mr. Ludovici's is hardly human. One wonders what kind of woman the writers have been thrown with, to have formed such quaint conceptions of the sex; and what kind of man, too, for that matter, for on the infrequent occasions when they consider the male sex, their discoveries are quite as surprising as those they make concerning women. Mrs. Lombroso, for example, observes naively that "a man must wish to gain fame as a writer or an artist before he can write or paint a masterpiece." This quotation gives a sufficient measure of Mrs. Lombroso's intelligence. It is hardly surprising that both she and Mr. Ludovici should fail to convince us that woman is what they say she is; for there is no formula in which a whole sex can be adequately described; the variations in character are at least as many as the individuals that the category includes. A sex, like a nation or a race, is an aggregation of individuals.

Suppose, however, for the sake of argument, that certain characteristics may be considered exclusively feminine, such, for instance, as the love of personal adornment; would it not be logical to inquire whether they are so because of some quality inherently female, or whether they owe their existence to the influence upon woman of her long subordination? For a good many centuries woman's stock-in-trade has been her sex; hence it is quite natural that she should have made the most of it. It may be that personal adornment simply represents an effort to enhance her sex-attraction. Such class-characteristics as women may have developed through their enforced specialization in sex should fairly, I think, be considered in the light of that specialization. This course is taken by Mathilde and Mathias Vaerting in a book<sup>2</sup> which would recommend itself, if for no other reason, by virtue of its remarkable freedom from cant and sentimentality. The argument advanced by the Vaertings is that those characteristics which are assumed to be exclusively feminine are in reality the characteristics of a subordinate sex; that where women dominate, men tend to take on those characteristics, even to the extent of profound alteration in physical appearance; and that where the sexes are equal, sharp differentiation in respect to these characteristics tends to disappear. It seems to me that the Vaertings have indicated a much more rational method of approach to the question of differences between the sexes than that taken by writers who assume that because women in the past have ap-

<sup>1</sup>Since the interests of the State and society seem to me to be mutually exclusive, I will henceforth use the former term in this connexion; and this without prejudice to the authors under review, who make no such distinction.

<sup>2</sup>"The Dominant Sex." Mathilde and Mathias Vaerting. New York: George H. Doran Company. \$3.00.

peared to be thus-and-so, they are so by nature and must necessarily continue to be so.

When all is said, however, the vital question concerning women, and men as well, is not what they have been or at present are, but what hereafter they may become. To prescribe what they must become, or must continue to be, is dogmatic; it is also futile. We are quite obviously in the midst of a world-wide change in the relative position of the sexes, a movement far too great in its scope to be regarded as the work of a few perverse feminists. It will go forward of itself, and those institutions which stand in its way are likely to be modified or swept aside, in spite of protests. It may be that much that is good will be lost, as happens in political revolutions; but the change is there and must be reckoned with. The one fact, clearly, which feminism will sooner or later have to take into primary account is the vanity of contemplating social or political freedom for either sex unless the economic freedom of both sexes be first established. The question what women, or men, may become, is truly, as the feminists say, the question of freedom; but it is the question of human freedom—of economic freedom first, and the development of political and social freedom upon the basis of economic freedom. Human freedom, however, is the one thing of which these anti-feminists whom I have been discussing—and the representative feminists too, no less—seem most afraid.

SUZANNE LA FOLLETTE.

### LIVING ART.

At the Montross Gallery in New York there recently appeared an exhibition of paintings and drawings, together with reproductions of a number of them—the plates which make up the portfolio just issued by the Dial Publishing Company, under the title "Living Art."<sup>1</sup> While no one would make the mistake of supposing that Mr. Scofield Thayer, who has arranged the portfolio, means that only the work of living men is living, there is little doubt that his restriction of the collection to works showing certain tendencies means that for him this way is life to-day, and that in the opposite direction is death.

With this view the present reviewer is in accord, while reserving the privilege of minor differences of opinion concerning the men and works represented. The absence of Rouault, Braque, Villon, de la Fresnaye and Duchamp, for example, is a loss not well compensated for by the presence of Munch, de Fiori, Grant, Lachaise and others. There is value, however, in the international scope of the work, which shows that art is being produced in more than one country. The case would have been strengthened on this point had the collection included the work of Maurice Prendergast, which would, I believe, have appealed to the artists here represented as the strongest painting of our day outside France, and indeed comparable with some of the best work of that country.

But the preface disclaims any attempt to cover the whole field of living art, and therefore our main interest is in the work itself. Here are ten photographs of sculptures and twenty plates after paintings and drawings. The reproductions are executed by those processes which during the last few years have been so nearly perfected that as regards all but the two oil paintings we have here what may fairly be called facsimiles. The subtle aroma of the original, that which renders priceless the work from the master's hand, will probably elude for ever the reproducer of objects of art, but it is doubtful if much further technical progress can be made. One seems to have under one's eyes the very work of Derain, Picasso, Vlaminck or

Marin; and perhaps the whole problem of developing in our country an appreciation of contemporary art can be solved if this collection meets with the success it deserves, and each succeeding year sees the publication of five hundred groups of thirty plates such as form the present edition. Even in cases where the works chosen for reproduction are not the most important ones by the living masters (water-colours were largely selected as suffering least change when printed on paper, which does not render the quality of oil painting), the many who have derived their appreciation of the old masters from reproductions of their work may likewise come to understand the moderns from these plates.

If there are to-day only a few colleges that would place these works before their students, or would do so with the same confidence with which they place the corresponding productions of contemporary writers before classes in literature, it is not because the painters and sculptors of to-day are less important than the poets and novelists. More familiarity with modern works is doubtless all that is needed to convince educators of the greatness of the present time in its art-expression. In confirmation of this idea, I need only mention the increasing number of works by modern masters which are entering the museums of this country and of Europe. Whether or not the present period is producing art equal in value to that of fifty years ago can be decided only by time; but one can affirm with some confidence that greater advances towards appreciation of contemporary work are being made nowadays than in the nineteenth century. The museums are being studied to better advantage: the principles which unite the arts of different ages and races are becoming objects of study, as opposed to the matter of external appearance which seems to place barriers between the various types of expression. It is when we have reached an understanding of the inner likenesses among the arts that we see how the work of a Matisse or a Picasso, which at first seemed revolutionary, only renews phases of tradition which have been neglected for a time. The challenge involved in the title of the portfolio before us is therefore an essential one: it involves not only the question which contemporary works are living to-day, but which of them will be living to-morrow. But we may as well let to-morrow take care of itself; and while I have spoken of the educational value of "Living Art," I should be missing the main feature of this collection if I failed to mention its capability of giving pleasure to-day.

We still have master painters among us. No one with a title less splendid could have conceived a work like the Matisse here reproduced. No one but a master would dare to present so simply the essentials of his art, without the false trappings of pictorial effects relevant to some other conception but irrelevant to the expression of his love of the daylight and the things seen in it. The whole work is as unashamed as a primitive, and yet Matisse, with his slow, careful investigation of the complex elements which have gone into his finely balanced art, is the last man whom one could call a primitive to-day. Delighting in nature and in mankind, he has expressed, in the present painting as in innumerable others, his feeling for life in terms of design and colour that many of us believe to be on the plane of the best design and colour of the past. And though the words I use to speak of his qualities belong to the vocabulary of the studios, the pictures in which these qualities appear are not simply for artists, but for anyone capable of getting enjoyment from art. So also with the water colour by Derain; slight as it seems at first (and one might indeed wish that a public unused to his work should come to know him through his more massive oil painting), the firmness and dignity of his art is such that even in these few brush-marks upon

<sup>1</sup> "Living Art." Edited by Scofield Thayer. New York: The Dial Publishing Company. \$60.00.

a sheet of paper one feels the master draftsman in the contours of the landscape, and in the lines and tones which make up a reposeful and yet stimulating ensemble.

One sees in Picasso's "Le Ménage des Pauvres" the tragic depth of feeling which is still possible in our period; one feels its sense of grand spaces in his "Le Bain des Chevaux"; and one realizes its refusal to halt even upon such brilliant achievement as this, its demand for evolution to a purer form, in the drawing of two figures dating from the year 1920, and since surpassed by the artist.

Our period has been one of effort, and at moments we have a kind of nostalgia for the time when change was less rapid and accomplishment more serene. But if we permit ourselves such a feeling as we contemplate certain works in the museums, we must not think that we can be Greeks or Egyptians merely by wishing to be such. There is always the question of the life of the period—always the question how wide is the expanse that the artists see ahead of them. We have gone fast in modern times because immense new possibilities have presented themselves. The adventurous mood has more and more gained ascendancy over the mood of the perfection-seeking craftsman; yet the sum of delight that the modern artists have to offer the world is perhaps no less than that offered by artists of the past.

WALTER PACH.

### PRINCE HEMPSEED.

"PRINCE HEMPSEED"<sup>1</sup> is an accomplished and satisfying work. It is in the tradition, if anything so recent deserves the term, of writers like Mr. Aldous Huxley and Mr. David Garnett, a tradition which the critics have already misnamed classical. But Mr. Hudson is far more substantial and convincing than Mr. Huxley, more himself and more an artist; and he is not, like Mr. Garnett, a sort of side-show which nobody else is likely to emulate. In his balance, his objectivity, his economy, he might well be called classical; but he owes little to the eighteenth century, from which both Mr. Huxley and Mr. Garnett borrow large and undigested blocks of their attitude; and his work is full of delicate psychological intuitions which were hardly guessed at in that age. He has succeeded in giving a beautiful surface to emotions and reactions as modern as those with which Mr. Lawrence struggles in his subconscious narratives. That is to say that he has set them in the realm of art, compromising nothing, so far as one can judge, of their truth. The surface, the artistic texture of the novel is unusually fine, is even a little too accomplished; and Mr. Hudson not only directs the storm very adroitly, he occasionally gives one the impression that it is only a breeze. But that is probably a defect of his modesty of presentation, his proportion, and for these qualities one is so thankful at present that one is willing to pay a slight indemnity. There is an entire absence in Mr. Hudson's work of the peculiarly contemporary vice of gloating, practised as an art by Mr. Lawrence and as a duty by almost everybody else. The touch is firm, is impartial, whatever the incident may be; and Mr. Hudson neither lingers over unpleasant details nor flies in haste from the uninvitingly typical. In reading the book one is constantly pleased by its adroitness, its technical resource; but on laying it down one is astonished to discover that a whole gallery of characters, a whole section of life, have made their impression on one's imagination. The author's chief virtues, obscured during the perusal by his deftness of presentation, are proportion and imaginative justice. He has not only portrayed a section of life; he has set it out in such a way that the various parts have neither too much nor

too little importance. The book is not only adroitly executed; it is also justly designed.

"Prince Hempseed" traces the development of Richard Kurt from childhood to adolescence. I use the word development, but that is a term far too definite for the casual processes through which a boy passes without knowing much about them until he discovers with astonishment that he has left them behind. In this progress much is lost as well as gained; opportunities have slipped past which can never come again; while one has been thinking of other things habitudes have formed which have become part of character. One half-wakens to find oneself inexplicably bound by things done or omitted which before did not seem important, and which in any case one could not have avoided. Mr. Hudson's apparently casual method of presentation gives very skilfully this remorseful sense of chance unexpectedly hardening to destiny which is the experience of almost everybody in boyhood and youth. In the end, it seems to me, the hero capitulates a little too easily to the past; and the chief fault of the book is that the conclusion is too decisive, too sudden, after the conditionality of the rest. One's character is not immutably set at eighteen. Yet Mr. Hudson's hero writes in the last few pages of the book:

When I was small, Nanny Clifford and Fräulein Schwind always said I was discontented. It was true. I am discontented and I am afraid I always shall be because whether I'm right or wrong, I know I want something in every way different from what I've got or ever can get. . . . Looking back on my life, I see it like a river separated almost from its source into two streams which keep getting wider apart. And I see that everything I have done all my life, everything I have had to do, has widened that angle and that everything always will widen it. And yet I don't think it ought to be widened. There ought to be some way or other of making these two streams meet again but I don't think I shall ever discover it or, if I do, only after many, many years, and by then it will be too late.

In another place in another book that would be æsthetically true, but, coming suddenly at the conclusion of a novel which makes no preparation for it, it overthrows proportion. The author manages his other transitions so well that one can not account for this particular aberration. Perhaps he found some difficulty in achieving a congruous ending to the book; perhaps he wished at last to sum up the general impression in one meditation: at any rate, that meditation gives one a shock, as if, without Mr. Hudson's knowledge, the hero had all at once become ten years older. A survey such as this of a period of one's life is not possible when one is just emerging from it; only the passage of many years makes things so clear and so apparently pre-determined; and by that time, for good or ill, one is occupied in other ways.

The book is full of suggested beauty, and of qualities at once solid and distinguished. In presenting his characters through the medium of a boy's temperament and acquired prejudices the author has at the same time succeeded in giving them objectivity. Richard Kurt writes throughout in the first person, but indirectly we are persuaded to discount his judgments and to make compensation where it is due, even to the father, to whom least apparent justice is done. The minor characters come out as clearly as if, like the hero, they wrote in their own persons. Even those who only appear for a few pages endure in the imagination. Uncle Leopold who "wore a black cap . . . and had little bags under his eyes"; Mr. Milosovitch; Garnett, a perfectly handled episode; above all, M'Grath with his nice ways and his pumps; all these are not only clever portraits, they are just and true. Throughout, the story suggests a reserve of meaning, a depth merely reflected on the surface; but it is only when

<sup>1</sup> "Prince Hempseed." Stephen Hudson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.00.

we have finished it that we realize that these qualities were all the time there. Mr. Hudson conceals his traces almost too successfully, and the deceptive suavity of the book may persuade a few that there is nothing very much in it. There could not be a bigger mistake.

EDWIN MUIR.

### MINOR POETRY.

Now that the hubbub and excitement that accompanied the outburst of new American poetry in the years 1913 and following has quite died down, it is the turn of the minor American poet to make, or remake, for us his appearance. To tell the truth, the minor poet, like the poor, is always with us. Only at times he is obscured by more interesting figures. When the age is one of great spiritual sterility and outward industry, like the present day, the minor versifier perforce occupies the centre of the stage, because there is no one else to talk about. One recalls that Poe was forced to praise N. P. Willis, Albert Pike and heaven knows what others; and the 'eighties and 'nineties furnished a second plentiful crop of such minor poets as Stedman, Sill, Trumbull Stickney and so on. The time has now come when, in default of first-class work of original quality, it is again necessary to speak of minor poetry.

I find that the minor poet of the present day in America is not greatly inferior to his English or European cousin. If there is nothing in the present group of volumes so brilliantly polished as the best verses of, say, Mr. W. H. Davies, there is also nothing quite so dull as the work of many other of the Georgians. There is less tendency now in America to mistake naïve spontaneity for craftsmanship in the matter of verse-writing; another sign that America is becoming, if not a cultivated, at least an educated nation.

First in point of craftsmanship I am inclined to place two volumes by Miss Louise Bogan<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Ben Ray Redman.<sup>2</sup> Of these two Miss Bogan is the better writer. She does not commit the error of including, as Mr. Redman does in the second section of his book, much inferior and weakly sentimental matter. On the other hand her style, which betrays close study of Donne, Miss Lowell, and H. D., conceals an emptiness of thought that is positively painful.

Her view of the world is negative:

This is a dead scene for ever now,  
Nothing will ever stir,  
The sun will not brighten it more  
than this,  
Nor the rain blur.

The water will always fall, and will  
not fall,  
And the tipped bell make no sound,  
The grass will always be growing for hay,  
Deep in the ground.

Mr. Redman is far less sophisticated than this, and far more human. One suspects that the spectacle of the world which he views through a lens of irony still hurts him; and one likes him the better for the fact. His "Men, Women and Words" reveals a romantic idealist parading in robes of cynicism borrowed for the occasion from Mr. T. S. Eliot. In other poems, Mr. Redman reveals more tenderness towards humanity. We at least are seeking for some kind of permanent good, he seems to say, but are not at all likely to find it.

<sup>1</sup>"Body of This Death." Louise Bogan. New York: Robert M. McBride Co. \$1.50.

<sup>2</sup>"Masquerade." Ben Ray Redman. New York: Robert M. McBride Co. \$1.50.

"Lackeys of the Moon"<sup>3</sup> is, like Mr. Redman's book, the product of a disillusioned romantic. Mrs. Canfield's work is, though it is written in prose, essentially poetry in the popular sense that poetry represents a flight away from reality. Although it is written in dramatic form, it is not much of a play. The characters are puppets, cleverly manipulated, but nevertheless creatures of sawdust. Mrs. Canfield has played for safety in writing about characters easily studied through books. Here is Venice of the eighteenth century; dissolute princes, needy abbés, strolling players, and a beautiful lady struggling to preserve her purity. What this has to do with America—and the America of the Pacific Coast—is not so clear. Yet this work won a prize, I understand, at San Diego.

The next two books on my list are for those who like verse unalloyed with bitterness of scepticism, pessimism, or tragedy. Both Mrs. Gifford<sup>4</sup> and Mr. Charles Divine<sup>5</sup> are buoyant singers, and neither has more than an average equipment for the task. Of the two, I prefer Mrs. Gifford. She looks deeper into life, sees more, and says what she has to say with such directness of utterance that one is always aware in reading her that though one is not in contact with a poet, one is in touch with an actual human personality.

JOHN GOULD FLETCHER.

### SHORTER NOTICES.

ONE thinks of the Dreyfus affair in reading "Silbermann,"<sup>6</sup> the novel by Jacques de Lacretelle which won for its author the award of the Prix Femina-Vie Heureuse. Although the setting of the story is a French school, the theme is essentially that of an unfair, unreasoning race-prejudice—the same animus which manifested itself in that historic case. The author describes the curious form which this antipathy takes among the French schoolboys towards a Jewish associate, projecting the story through the mind of a sympathetic boy who sides with Silbermann and finds himself practically an outcast. The story is developed with directness and economy; there is no hysteria in its handling. The style is lucid and unencumbered, with only now and then a trace of the panegyric.

L. B.

PEOPLE are blown about in Mr. Lawrence Vail's novel<sup>7</sup> like autumn leaves. They are caught up in gay little eddies of intrigue, driven by fitful gusts of passion, scattered by mere cleverness. They do not remain at rest long enough to give one any sense of their reality; their author evidently believes that by racing his characters across the pages he can give them the momentum of life. It does not work. In an atmosphere of sustained smartness and sophistication, these nimble wisps of his fancy wear themselves out—become desiccated and yellow. The central romance is an arrangement of external gaiety, in which the essential values are sacrificed to maintain the pattern. A great many words are spilled—about life, about art, about love; but the search for that distraction which animates Mr. Vail's characters is a boomerang which serves but to distract the reader.

L. B.

### A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

HAZLITT, in one of his essays, expressed a doubt whether in another twenty years any of his contemporaries would still be read. The remark gives point to the observation of another essayist that we can not criticize the writers of our own time, that we can only talk about them: we lack the necessary perspective to form any estimate of

<sup>3</sup>"Lackeys of the Moon." Mary Cass Canfield. New Haven: The Brick Row Bookshop. \$2.00.

<sup>4</sup>"The Ancient Beautiful Things." Fannie Stearns Davis (Mrs. A. McK. Gifford). New York: The Macmillan Company. \$1.00.

<sup>5</sup>"Gipsy Gold." Charles Divine. New York: Thomas Seltzer. \$1.25.

<sup>6</sup>"Silbermann." Jacques de Lacretelle. New York: Boni and Liveright. \$2.00.

<sup>7</sup>"Piri and I." Lawrence Vail. New York: Lieber and Lewis. \$2.00.

their permanent value, we know merely that they appeal or fail to appeal to ourselves, but we have no means of knowing what the next generation will think of them. This has perhaps always been true in a measure, but it is true in a special sense to-day, for the reading public has been so diluted and disintegrated, it has become so much a *party* public, that no writer can expect to survive in the general mind. A "standard author" is a peculiar phenomenon created by certain conditions of which his own genius is only one. The "standard author" of the nineteenth century may be regarded as the successor of the "classical author" of previous ages: the one implied the existence of an organized aristocracy, the other of an organized bourgeoisie. The middle class appears now to be following the aristocracy into dissolution, and the result is a general feeling of insecurity that manifests itself in every corner of the literary world.

WE note first of all the absence in contemporary literature of many of the normal phenomena of literary history. For example, the monumental undertaking, not merely in history and poetry but in fiction as well. Such an effort as Balzac's or Zola's, both of whom attempted to give a complete picture of the society of their time, is hardly conceivable to-day; nor do we produce works that represent long study and preparation or that finally express some original intention that has been slowly maturing for years in our minds. Such works, at least, are very rare. Indeed, we no longer use the words that describe them: the very terms "works," "monumental" and the like are all but obsolete, and if, thanks to this, we escape the pomposity of the past, how much do we lose that accompanied that pomposity. A few exiles from Culture-Philistia, a few Scandinavians who are in touch with the profound sources of life continue to produce regardless of the comminution of society, but the æsthetic journalist, whose impulse is to strike while the iron is hot, is generally in possession of the field. Literature was probably never more entertaining than it is to-day, but every generation provides its own entertainment. The future can be trusted to do so without help from us.

ALL this has its compensations. Who can regret the passing of the social order from which sprang the splendours of nineteenth-century literature? Besides, in spite of the advertisements, there is a genuine freedom from pretence in the present generation; it is quite aware of its own weakness, frank and honest, and the solemn humbug is as rare to-day as the divinely appointed creator. The spread of satire, of scepticism, of incredulity has had this among its many sanative effects; and this negative virtue makes up for certain positive vices. Everywhere, especially since the war, there has been a strange growth of cliques and coteries, mutual benefit and protection societies and magazines devoted to the propagation of secret writings. These curious efforts to communicate and at the same time obstruct communication, to court a public that is generally despised, to express and yet refrain from expressing, to substitute a cipher for a language, are perhaps what they profess to be—the most characteristic, the most symptomatic literary facts of the moment; but, like the phenomena of spiritualism, they lend themselves to a very unflattering psychological interpretation. The elements of gregariousness, evasiveness, contradictoriness (not to mention others more obviously pathological), of which they largely consist, reveal them as very notable signs of the insecurity I have mentioned.

"MEN are free," says Mr. D. H. Lawrence, "when they are in a living homeland, not when they are straying and

breaking away. Men are free when they are obeying some deep inward voice of religious belief. Men are free when they belong to a living, organic, believing community, active in fulfilling some unfulfilled, perhaps unrealized purpose." This, we might almost say, is the condition of a great literature—though the community may be, ideally perhaps should be, and indeed in the eighteenth century was, the world. There still exist communities that retain this belief, in others it is always on the point of being regenerated, and we may look forward with absolute confidence to a day, not too remote, when a new assembly of philosophers, gathered from all peoples, will revive in some undreamed-of form the pan-human faith of the Encyclopædists. But for our contemporaries—those, at least, whose consciousness dates from the war—nothing of the kind has ever existed. They inhabit a ravaged, hostile world, a world that has ceased to believe in itself and offers them no postulates, moral and social, that they can share.

THIS fact explains, as it also excuses, the chaotic ineffectualness of so much contemporary literature. It is unable either to uphold or react against anything socially or morally important, and consequently has no fulcrum. Without the general notion of "sin" Baudelaire's diabolism would have been a mere succession of passes in the air. Whether they attacked or defended the accepted values of society, the great writers of the nineteenth century derived their intensity from the existence of those values. If they opposed tradition it was in the name of reason; if they opposed rationalism it was in the name of faith. They were able to resist one cause because they were so firmly grounded in another, and this gave them their momentum, called their forces into play and developed that astonishing energy, so common in their generation, which has scarcely any counterpart in ours. Left to himself, separated from these general currents of a living society, the individual can accomplish very little. He becomes an "infinitely repellent particle," feeding on his own complexes.

BECAUSE of this the world that is reflected in contemporary literature is very small. When we think of Whitman, Melville, Ibsen, Borrow, Tolstoy we seem to be looking out through immense windows that open upon vast spaces—continents, oceans, or long vistas of history. Everything is magnified; the human drama assumes colossal proportions; we are participants in some elemental conflict of darkness and light; human nature regains in our consciousness the tragic dignity it so seldom seems to possess in our own personal experience. It is extraordinary, considering the extent to which science has enlarged our knowledge of life, that literature to-day should convey so small a sense of it; but this is because our experience is more and more personal and less and less general. If Mr. Yeats attached himself to the cause of Irish nationalism, if Maurice Barrès attached himself to the cause of nationalism in France, if Anatole France attached himself to the socialist movement, it was, we may be sure, from motives of self-preservation; there are very few social institutions from which we can still draw the sap of existence, and each of these great movements contains a fund of general life. If literature is not to pass into a long sleep, the prey of a sterile æstheticism that substitutes the means for the end, it must re-establish its connexion with the labouring body of humanity: it must assume that this body has a purpose and a direction. And the great task of the writers of to-day is to discover, among the innumerable cross-currents of the choppy sea of our generation, the cause that contains the most fruitful germs of the future.

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